Alabama Chess Antics

May - July 1998 **$3.00**

Stuart Rachels (already a master at age 11) with Lamar Daniel in 1981.

What's Inside	
President's Letter *by Bill Melvin*	**3**
Games and Analysis	**4 - 12**
Two Games I Lost at the Space City *by Bill Melvin*	4 - 8
Game from the Queen of Hearts *by Stephen Muhammad*	9; 33
Game from the Mobile City Champ. *by A.J. Goldsby*	10 - 11
Practical Chess Advice *by Bill Melvin*	12
A Tribute to Stuart Rachels	**13 - 19**
Stuart Rachels - the Greatest ? *by Kyle Therrell*	13 - 17
Stuart's First Tournament *by Prof. James Rachels*	17
A Night with Stuart Rachels ... *by Andrew Whatley*	18
Stuart and the Sicilian *by Lamar Daniel*	19
Scholastic Section	**20 - 26**
Tournament Day *by Thomas H. Young, Jr.*	20 - 21
1998 Holy Spirit Scholastic ... *by Bill Melvin*	22 - 23
1998 Holy Spirit Scholastic Crosstables	24
1998 All-America Chess Team *by Jack Mallory*	25
South of the Saltline *by Jack Mallory*	26
Display ads, Chess Foundation of Alabama, and Crosstables	**27 - 32**
Vulcan Open ad	27
Queen of Hearts Crosstable	28 - 29
Magic City Open Crosstable	30 - 31
Chess Foundation of Alabama Invests *by Sam Whatley*	32
Alabama Youth in England *by Sam Whatley*	32
Stephen Muhammad Internet Chess Training ad	33
First Sunday Quads and Birmingham Chess Club ad	33
Heart of Dixie Chess Tour *by Bill Melvin*	34
ACF Calendar ***maintained by Dr. Ken Sloan***	**35**

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President's Letter *by Bill Melvin*

The 1998 All-American Chess Team boasts a record five All-Stars from Alabama (details elsewhere in this issue). Three Alabama Juniors (Andrew Whatley, Andy Reeder, and Daniel Thomas; Matt Puckett is an alternate) were just invited to a prestigious junior chess tournament in Surrey, England from July 14-16, 1998. It is so easy for us to take our strong Juniors for granted. Yet, our Juniors are now stronger than the adults in the State. They are seemingly always on Board One of the Open section in the last round of Alabama tournaments. Congratulations to our stable of young chess juggernauts!

Also in the news, the winners for the 1997 Novag Grand Prix were announced by the USCF on March 11. Congratulations go to Andy Reeder for First Place Under Age 16 and to Matt Puckett for Second Place Under Age 16. Andy and Matt will each receive a new Novag Turquoise chess computer for their efforts.

As witnessed by this issue, the Antics is being reliably published at regular intervals throughout the year. Quality contributions are appreciated now more than ever. Please take the time to contribute to a regular column (like Chess Parents) or start a new column of your own!

On a personal note, I have decided to run for re-election as your President for the 1998-99 term. This doesn't assure that I'll win and I'll gladly step aside to a worthy successor. I do like my chances since I've run unopposed twice so far (both races were close, though...). After the 1998-99 term I do not intend to run again. I feel strongly that fresh, enthusiastic people will be better suited to run things at that time.

Thus far, I haven't gotten everything done that I wish to accomplish. In cases where I've met strong opposition, I've only had to assume that I am in the minority. All in all, I don't feel I've made enough mistakes and haven't proposed enough radical ideas. Here are two such areas where I would like to see improvement:

1. The only notification you will receive when your ACF membership expires is encoded on the mailing label of the Antics. Is this sufficient notification? I don't think so. We already debated this at length during my first business meeting. But, I'm still not happy with the current process. Is a postcard such a work burden and expense? Am I the only one who feels this is ridiculous?

2. I'm not happy with the way the ACF handles memberships. Obtaining a current membership roster for holding tournaments is bothersome as you have to know to contact the ACF Secretary/Treasurer in advance. Organizers don't like having to mess with memberships. Some players don't want the magazine. Many households get two or more issues as our system doesn't offer any flexibility. Is requiring ACF membership a sacred cow? What if we stopped requiring anyone to join for any reason? Would the sky fall? My guess is that 90%+ of the current adult membership would renew and the scholastic members who aren't interested in the Antics (or can't read!) wouldn't bother. In short, only the people interested in the magazine would renew. Is that so bad?

This would greatly simplify all of our processes and relieve a small financial burden from many of our members. While the ACF provides other services outside of the Antics, the Antics is far and away our biggest expense. It is true that the price per magazine increases as the quantity printed decreases. Yet, the workload for copying, folding, stapling, and mailing would also decrease. Altogether, I believe the ACF could survive just fine with this revolutionary change. Am I the only one who feels that such drastic measures are justified?

Looking ahead, the next ACF President will likely come from a background in scholastic chess. It is simply a matter of noting that the most active volunteers in Alabama are involved in scholastic chess. This is a good thing. Chess playing adults support all of our scholastic programs and provide much of the manpower and expertise to help run them. Scholastic volunteers are also supportive of adult chess. They might not know enough to get involved in promoting adult chess, but they understand the need for the scholastics to have a place to play when they reach adulthood. While scholastic and adult events are generally held apart from each other, each benefits immensely from having the other around. One provides new blood and the other provides expertise.

Your current ACF President has a leg in both worlds. My seven year old son would rather play chess than soccer (and he is excellent at soccer) while I am a chess master who played in my first Alabama chess tournament in 1982. Despite the fact that most of our momentum is in the area of scholastic chess, I really don't want the adults to feel left out in any way. So, for the remainder of my Presidency, I will remain especially receptive for ideas in improving adult chess in Alabama.

Chess is doing great in Alabama. Let's make it even better!

Two Games I Lost at the Space City Open

by Bill Melvin

The Space City Open held March 14-15, 1998 was a tough tournament for me. I lost games to Andy Reeder and Gerald Larson. They eventually went on to tie for first in the Open section and deservedly so. You learn more from your losses than your wins and these were certainly instructional losses for me. Andy beat me through perseverence in a tough position which continually flowed back and forth. The finish was extraordinary and I still can't believe how innocent my final losing move looked. Gerald beat me with a spectacular piece sacrifice in the middle of the board in what was easily the prettiest game I've lost in a while.

Space City Open Huntsville
Round 3 Board 1
March 14, 1998 40/90 SD/30
Irregular Opening

Andy Reeder	**Bill Melvin**
(2161)	**(2237)**

1. d4 e6 2. Nf3 c5 3. c3 d5

Anyone who thinks that Masters only start their games with 30 moves of theory haven't played over enough Master games yet! Andy and I are out in the streets already on move 3.

4. Bg5 f6

Lots of people are uncomfortable making such moves. It is true that the a2-g8 diagonal is seriously weakened by such a move. However, I was counting on the pawn to bolster the center by controlling e5. My g8 knight develops easily to e7 after placing my bishop on d6. I felt that 4. ... f6 crossed my opponent's plans and gave him a slightly more difficult position to play. Even though I lose this game, I'm not convinced that 4. ... f6 is an error.

5. Bf4 Nc6 6. e3 Bd6
7. Bg3 Nge7 8. Nbd2 Nf5?

What marks to give a move? This move earns a full "?" in my book since Black's position looked so solid and healthy before this move and it quickly starts to look questionable. The plan of snagging the bishop pair is not a bad plan, but Black must remember that White moved first and has not made a mistake. So, any Black "gains" must come at a price. Simply 8. ... O-O keeps a healthy position where White may soon have little to show for moving first. After playing my move, White's reply looked obvious to me.

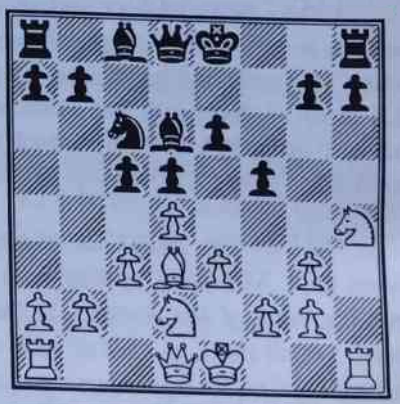
9. Bd3 Nxg3

White just said "Go ahead, take my bishop and I'll maul you on the light squares." Black should say "Can't you take a joke..." and retreat the knight with 9. ... Nfe7. Admitting a previous move is bad is difficult, but is the lesser evil here. I don't see a convenient way for White to exploit the loss of time. Things get harry quickly after my move..

10. hg f5!

My original plan involved 10. ... h6, 11. Bg6+ with Nh4 and I intended to exchange minor pieces with Ne7 and Bc8-d7-e8. In the middle of these calculations, I decided that my position was starting to look a little silly as White can easily reinforce g6 by bringing up the other knight and his queen. Since I didn't see any compensation for the nagging g6 problem, I decided on another plan. 10. ... f5 fights for control of the light squares on the kingside. While it may close the position, I was confident that I could eventually manage an e5 or f4 break to open things up again after my king was secure. Under the circumstances, this may be the lesser of evils.

11. Nh4



Position after 11. Nh4

11. ... Qg5

This move was to be my ace in the hole. My queen can guard light squares (Ng6 was threatened) while I calmly develop and prepare to smash the kingside. Andy's move proved quite a surprise...

12. g4 O-O!?

First of all, attempts to win a pawn don't work out. Andy would have met 12. ... Qxg4 with 13. Qxg4 fg, 14. Ng6 Rg8, 15. Rh7 where Black has serious problems both developmentally and in structure. Also, 12. ... fg, 13. Ng6 isn't any better. So, Black cannot take the pawn.

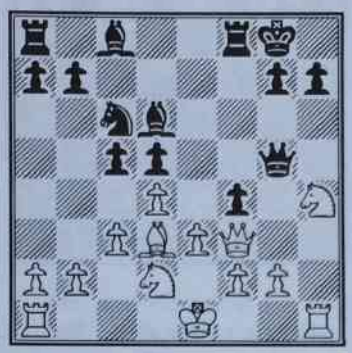
Another try here is 12. ... Bd7 preparing to castle long. The situation gets interesting after 13. gf ef, 14. g4 Ne7 where variations like 15. Nxf5 Nxf5, 16. Rh5 Nxe3, 17. Qe2 Bxg4 start to look a little too convoluted. Both sides have plenty of options in all the variations of this line. This is what made the game so much fun to play. I won't even try to cover all the bases.

My move says "Hey, Andy, my light squares aren't weak and I'm attacking you on the kingside. I will castle into your so called attack." I was excited to be playing a game whereby each player had a contradictory opinion of what was really going on.

13. gf ef 14. Qf3? ...

In a tough position, this move is a lemon which should lose the game. While strong moves for white are difficult to suggest, he might try 14. Qc2 or 14. g3 and dare me to sacrifice a bishop on g3 (probably sound). Throwing either knight at f3 also looks playable. My reply casts much doubt upon Andy's position.

14. ... f4



Position after 14. ... f4

You should never think "I am going to win" during a chess game. You should only be focused on the next move. Yet, while trying to find a satisfactory move for White I could only think "I am going to win!" I don't believe I've ever seen a worse looking position. I was thrilled to be doing so well against Andy on move 14 with Black. A few sample variations are in order:

If 15. e4 (or any other non relevant move) then 15. ... Bg4 wins the queen.

If 15. g3 then 15. ... fg totally wrecks White's position.

If 15. ef then White must be prepared to play the position after 15. ... Bxf4, 16. Qd1 (what else?) Bg4 followed by an invasion of the entire Black army or 16. ... Bxd2+ and a nice looking ending.

If 15. Qe2 then simply 15. ... fe opens up White's position and destroys the dark squares.

Things looked so desperate for Andy that I was starting to expect a weak continuation like 15. Ne4 de4, 16. Qe4 g6 when white has nothing for his desperation.

Twenty six long minutes passed by before Andy decided upon his move. He really showed his stuff keeping cool in such a difficult situation. However, he had only left himself with 19 minutes for 25 moves against an opponent who loves complications.

15. Nf5! ...

I have to give this move an "!" even though White had at least one more alternative. My computer found 15. Bxh7+ Kxh7, 16. Nf5+ Kg8 where Black still seems to come out on top after either 17. Nxd6 or 17. Qxd5+. In all cases the open nature of White's position provides compensation for any temporarily sacrificed pawns. I'll admit that this is a mess, though. Even the computer gives Black just a small advantage here and it is complicated enough to even confuse a silicon beast.

15. ... Bxf5?

I now play my first of many weak moves in this game. Simply 15. ... Rf5 leads to a nice edge for black. After 16. Bf5 Qf5, 17. Rh5 Qe6, White's position is much inferior. Andy mentioned this move after the game and my computer found it instantly. It never even occurred to me! In fact, 15. Nf5 hadn't occurred to me either. It is hard to win a chess game when your opponent sees deeper than yourself. 15. ... Rxf5 was a clear candidate move at least. I was so caught up in the complications after the game continuation that I ignored other attempts.

16. Qxd5+ Kh8 17. e4?! ...

Perhaps my assessment of 15. ... Bxf5 was correct after all. White surely had to grab a bishop here and the position seems to still heavily favor Black.

17. ... Qxg2??

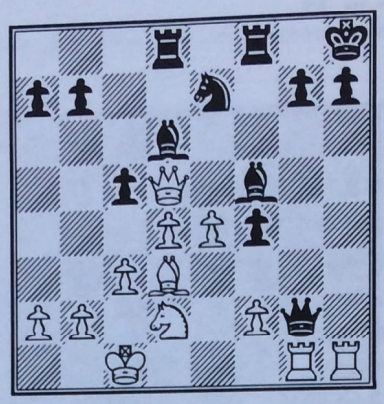
Yuck! What a horrendous move. My opponent had less than 15 minutes left at this point compared to around 45 minutes for me. All I had to do was play the obvious 17. ... Qe7 and keep the extra piece. Just avoiding a little trickery after 18. O-O-O Bg6, 19. e5 Bxd3, 20. ed should win handily as the pawns should be insufficient compensation for the missing piece.

What was I thinking? I simply missed White's next obvious move. I considered 18. Rf1 to be White's only reply when I intended simply 18. ... Bc7 and a winning position. The root cause of this problem was undoubtedly playing too quickly in my opponent's time pressure. I do this frequently and it is senseless in a superior position.

18. O-O-O Rad8

Now, it is okay to play quickly in my opponent's time pressure! I was completely convinced that my position was built upon sand. The open g and h files spell quick doom. No, the position of the Black queen doesn't help matters either. I felt my only chance was to complicate things further in a time scramble. This is probably a reasonable assessment of the situation. My 17th move was an error because I took too little time and my 18th move would have been an error had I taken too much time! Who said chess was easy!

19. Rdg1 Ne7



Position after 19. ... Ne7

Am I bluffing? Absolutely!

20. Rxg2? ...

This move deserves a question mark as I'm convinced that it throws away Andy's win. The correct move is 20. Qxb7 where I planned to instantly play 20. ... Bc8. I planned to meet 21. Qb3 with the startling queen sacrifice 21. ... f3. After 22. Rxg2 fg, 23. Rg1 Rxf2, I was hopeful that the complications here would enable me to pull something off.

The only problem is the annoying move my computer found. Instead of 21. Qb3, White simply plays 21. Rxh7+!! and meets 21. ... Kxh7 with 22. e5+ and Qxg2. Nice sacrifice of a rook to clear two diagonals with check! Black is no better after 21. ... Kg8, 22. Rxg2 and mate on g7 if Black captures the White queen.

20. ... Nxd5 21. ef f3

The position is roughly dynamically equal at last. Notice that I didn't say drawish! I still had a 35 to 5 minute time advantage to make 19 moves and a sound, though tricky, position. It is way too early to start talking about the drawing tendency of opposite colored bishops.

My 21st move is double edged. I knew that simply 21. ... Nf6 would forever blockade the kingside and be somewhat drawish. However, this move would allow my opponent to make time control 'for free' when more active moves were possible. So, I elected to move and likely lose the f4 pawn in order to clear the f4 square for my knight and bishop. I'm not sure such thinking is flawed as a time advantage can be a real advantage.

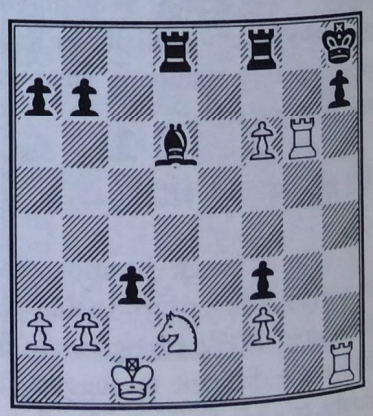
22. Rg4 Nf4 23. Be4 ...

This is the best move although it surprised me. I was hoping for 23.Bc4 (threatening Rxh7+ and a mate) where simply 23. ... Rxf5 gives Black a nice advantage.

23. ... cd

I felt I was crashing through at this point. Don't I win a pawn with the knight fork?

24. f6 g6 25. Bxg6 Nxg6 26. Rxg6 dc??



Position after 26. ... dc ??

Incredibly, this is the losing move! After the game, I suggested 26. ... Rg8 27. Rgh6, Rd7, but my computer neatly refuted that with 28. f7 and the win of a piece.

The correct move is 26. ... Bf4! preparing to answer 27. Rg7 with 27. ... h6 and the bishop holds the kingside. After 26. ... Bf4, best play appears to be 27. Kc2 dc, 28. Nxf3 cb, 29. Kxb2 with even material. I prefer Black slightly here, but the limited number of pawns make a draw a good possibility.

27. Rg7! cb+

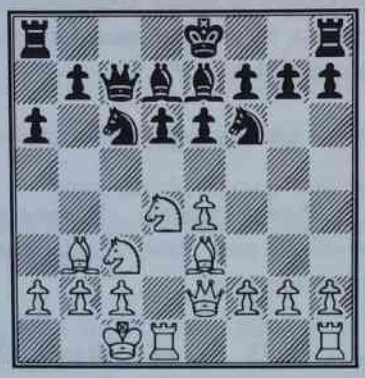
This was my last chance. On 27. ... cd+, 28. Kd1 and Black gets mated. I was hoping that Andy would blunder after 27. ... cb+ with 28. Kd1?? where 28. ... Bh2, 29. Rxh2 b1(Q) is mate.

28. Kb1 resigns

1 - 0

To his credit, Andy Reeder hung on and continually hunted for the best moves in a complicated game. He probably had at least a dozen chances to go wrong in time pressure and found his way. For my part, I fought as valiantly and then overlooked a pretty mate.

Space City Open Huntsville
Round 5 Board 2
March 15, 1998 40/90 SD/30
Sicilian (B89)
Gerald Larson (2033) Bill Melvin (2237)
1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cd 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 Nc6 6. Bc4 e6 7. Be3 Be7 8. Qe2 a6 9. Bb3 Qc7 10. O-O-O Bd7



Position after 10. ... Bd7

We are following the main ECO line through White's tenth move. My last move appears to be inaccurate, though. I should have played 10. ... O-O or 10. ... Na5 here. While the variations look like they should transpose, most of these complicated Sicilians defy casual analysis as so much often hinges on a single tempo.

For White's part, Gerald felt later that he should have continued 11. g4 as White will gladly enter into murky waters following 11. ... e5, 12. Nf5 and the d7 bishop now occupies the natural retreat square for the f6 knight.

11. f3 Na5

Okay, so I'm not totally clueless about the position! My move order was just a bit inaccurate.

12. g4 Nxb3 13. ab ...

I'm not sure I agree with White's decision to capture with the 'a' pawn. White's position is probably harder to attack after 13. cb. White might even decide to use the c file against Black after an eventual Kb1 and Rc1.

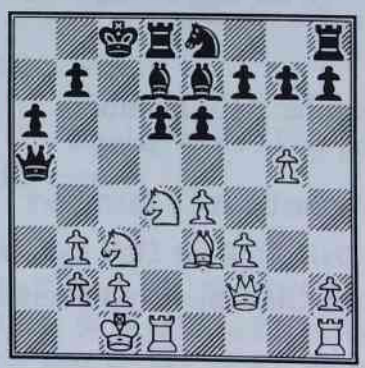
13. ... O-O-O?

I'll nominate this as my losing move! Gerald plays the rest of the game brilliantly and fully deserves to win. I had to play 13. ... Bc6 and permit my knight to retreat to d7. My move has its points and is part of a plan, but Gerald shows me the error of my ways. From here on, White seems much better in all variations.

14. g5 Ne8 15. Qf2 Qa5

The dark squares around my king are fatally weak. I was counting on White to spend a move with 16. h4 (the g pawn is threatened twice) when I could play Nc7, Bc6 and work for the d5 break. I liked my long-term prospects as I thought I would have the bishop pair against some over-extended White pawns.

After the game, Gerald felt that 15. ... g6 gave Black the best chance to hold. But we quickly agreed that after 16. Nde2 Qc6, 17. Bb6 Nc7, 18. Na4, White was clearly much better (with threats like Ba7 and Nb6+ or Rd1-d3-c3).



Position after 15. ... Qa5

16. Nf5!! ...

No turning back now for Gerald. This is a painful move to face. I wasn't all that confident about my position anyway. This sure doesn't cheer me up any!

16. ... ef 17. Nd5 Bf8 18. Bb6 Qb5

Process of elimination finds this move. On 18. ... Qa1+, 19. Kd2 Qxb2, 20. Bd4 Qa3, 21. Ra1 snares the queen. While Black can sacrifice the queen and still have close to enough material compensation, the queenside weaknesses should still be decisive.

19. Rd4! ...

I probably should just give "!"s to all of White's moves as Gerald saw everything in this pretty win. I expected a move like 19. Rd3 when 19. ... a5 gives the Black queen a retreat square on a6. His move is much stronger and threatens to win the queen on the spot with Rb4.

19. ... a5 20. Ra4! ...

Played instantly. In view of Ra4-a5-a8 and mate, Black must give up the queen.

20. ... Qxd5 21. ed Bxa4 22. Bxd8 Kxd8 23. ba Nc7

In view of Black's undeveloped army, White is winning by a large margin. The f8 bishop is having a bad day at work. It only gets worse for him.

24. Rd1 Be7 25. f4 h6 26. h4 hg 27. hg f6 28. g6 Rh6 29. Qg2 Na6

I tried desperately to tie down both the White queen and rook to defensive roles while I found a way to break the bind. Activate all of the Black pieces and Black could conceivably develop an edge. Gerald mercifully ends my misery quickly.

30. Rh1! Rxh1 31. Qxh1 Ke8 32. Qh8+ Bf8

There! My king and bishop hold the queen at bay while my knight rampages the board. Right?

33. Qg8 resigns

1 - 0

Nice finish too. Gerald should be proud of this pretty game. It isn't easy to decide to sacrifice a piece to a player rated 200 points higher than yourself. This game just goes to show that rating points don't play chess.

On a Roll ... *

Regular ACF members	77 in March 97	121 in March 98	up by 57 %
Scholastic ACF members	218 in March 97	254 in March 98	up by 17 %
State Championship attendance	54 in 1996	84 in 1997	up by 56 %
Queen of Hearts attendance	32 in 1997	51 in 1998	up by 59 %

* Statistics contributed by Rhodes Peele and Jack Mallory.

A Game from the Queen of Hearts
by FIDE Master Stephen Muhammad

This year's Queen of Hearts drew 51 players, including some powerhouses from out of state such as Stephen Muhammad from Columbus GA and A.J. Goldsby from Pensacola FL. The following game was played in the last round of the Open section of the tournament. Mr. Muhammad had drawn in round 3 to Bill Melvin and had to play for a win in this game to win the tournament. - R.P.

26th Queen of Hearts
Montgomery, AL; 2/15/98
5th Round; TC: 40/90; SD/30

W:Andrew Whatley (2255)
B: Stephen Muhammad (2315)

1. d4 Nf6 2. Nf3 g6 3. Bg5

The Torre Attack. A favorite of my opponent.

3. ... Bg7 4. Nbd2 d5 5. e3 Nbd7 6. Be2 O - O 7. b4 c6 8. O - O Re8 9. c3 e5

According to MCO Black has equalized.

10. Nb3 h6 11. Bxf6

A wise decision. White did not like the position after 11. Bh4 g5 12. Bg3 e4 followed by 13. ... Nh5 and 14. ... Nxg3.

11. ... Bxf6 12. a4 e4 13. Nfd2 Be7 !

From d6 the bishop will harrass the White king for the remainder of the game.

14. Qb1 Bd6 15. Nc5 Nf8 16. c4 b6 17. cd cd

Correct. Taking the piece with 17. ... bc would give White three pawns for the piece and complete control of the center after 18. bc Be7 19. d6 Bf6 and 20. Nxe4. Attempts to give back the piece for two pawns would be bad as well due to the weakness of c5.

Position after 17. ... cd

18. Na6 Qh4 19. g3 Qe7 20. b5 Nh7 21. Qb3 Be6 22. Rab1 Rac8 23. Rfc1 Ng5

Forcing a further weakening of White's kingside because the knight cannot be allowed to "hang out" around White's king.

24. h4 Nh7 25. Kg2 Nf6 26. Rh1 Kg7 27. Qd1 Rc3 28. Rb3 Rcc8 29. Nb1 h5 30. Nc3 Ng8 31. Na2 Nh6 32. N2b4 Nf5 33. Nc6 Qd7 34. Rc3 Nh6 35. Qd2 Ra8 !

Freeing the queen for the kingside attack.

36. Qa2 Bg4 37. Qd2 Qf5 38. Bxg4 Nxg4 39. Qe2 Re6 40. Rhc1 g5 41. Rh1

A sad necessity. My opponent is suffering from the effect of time trouble and heavy pressure against his king.

41. ... Rf6 42. Rc2 Qg6 43. Qe1 Rf3 44. hg

Position after 44. hg

44. ... Bxg3 !

Ripping White's king position apart.

45. Rg1 Bxf2 46. Rxf2 Rxf2+ 47. Qxf2 Nxf2 48. Ne5 Qf5 49. Rf1 Qh3+ 50. Kxf2 Rc8 51. Nc6 Qf3+ 52. Kg1 Qxe3+ 53. Rf2 Qc1+ 54. Kg2 Qxg5+ 55. Kf1 Qc1+ 56. Kg2 Kh8 57. Ne5 Rg8+ 58. Kh3 Qh1+ 59. Rh2 Qf1+ 60. resigns.

1 - 0

A Game from the Mobile City Championship

by A. J. Goldsby I, LM

Unless you have been playing for several years, and have played a lot of games you may not understand what I'm about to say. Others of you out there will readily identify with these concepts. All of us, if we are honest, will tell you that there are opponents that you seem to respond to differently. There may be an opponent (or two) that, although you may be higher rated than they are, you do not play as well against them as you might think you should. (For some, the word "nemesis" comes to mind.) And there may be others out there, that even though their rating may be higher than yours, you score pretty well against them - much better than the numbers (ratings) would suggest. (Bobby Fischer used to refer to these players as his "Favorite Customers"). And there may be still others with whom your rating is about the same, and your results are O.K., but you play the toughest games of your life against these players. Perhaps some of you more experienced campaigners play chess looking forward to these particular moments.

I find it interesting, that unlike a machine, a human will respond to different opponents, differently. Perhaps it is the interaction of you and your opponent's style. Whatever the reason, it is this chemistry that I find challenging. Trying to improve the results against the players who have given me difficulty in the past, trying to surpass myself against the players who used to give those titanic battles, etc.

When I sat down to face Leo Denton in the last round of the Mobile City Championship, virtually nothing was at stake. Due to an extremely heavy workload at work, I had only gotten about an hour and a half's sleep the night before. Also, I had scored very poorly against the "Double Doctor's Gambit". (I lost an exciting game against Dr. John Perciballi, and scored only a draw with the White pieces and a once very favorable pawn-up position against a very determined Dr. Peele.) So in round six, when I sat down to play Leo Denton, not even rating points were at stake. (The tournament was not USCF rated. Thank goodness!!) Of course there was the temptation to play a five-move draw in such a situation. But one thought had crossed my mind. I had the opportunity to level my lifetime score against Leo. Also, since I could not lose rating points, why not let it all hang out?

Mobile City Championship
12/13/97; TL: G/30

A.J. Goldsby I	**Leo Denton**
(2200)	**(2050)**

1. e4 d6 2. d4 Nf6 3. Nc3 g6 4. Nf3

In the Alabama State Championship, I used the Austrian Attack against Leo's Pirc. This time I decided to switch off at the last second to avoid any preparation.

4. ... Bg7 5. Bc4 O - O 6. Bb3

Now that Black has castled and White does not have Bxf7+, displacing Black's king, White wishes to avoid the simplifying combination ... Nxe4 Nxe4 d5. The retreat Bb3 is a common motif in many openings, most notably the Sicilian Sozin.

6. ... Bb4

My gut feeling is this is premature. But perhaps Black feared not being able to develop this piece and his entire Q-side after 6. ... Nbd7.

7. h3 Bxf3 8. Qxf3 e5 9. Be3 Nbd7 10. O - O - O c6 11. g4 Qe7 12. h4!?

Totally intuitive. White sees he will have to sack at least a pawn with this move. And probably not even Deep Blue could correctly calculate all the consequences of White's twelfth move, especially given the time limit of game in 30 minutes.

12. ... ed 13. Bxd4 Ne5 14. Qg2(!)

This move must have surprised Leo, given the rather startled look on his face. But after 14. Bxe5? Qxe5 the battery of Q & B on the long diagonal makes me nervous. Further, after 15. g5 Nh5, Black is doing very well. The K-side is blockaded and the dark squares, most notably f4, are firmly in his grasp.

14. ... Nfxg4!?

Perhaps Black is in too much of a hurry to grab this pawn which opens an important file on the King-side. An interesting alternative is 14. ... c5.

15. Kb1!

Another intuitive move. My original intent\t was to play 15. f4, but after 15. ... Bh6, I could not find a reasonable follow-up.

15. ... c5!?

I originally thought that after 15. ... h5, Black's game was airtight. Only in home analysis did I find the idea 16. f3, 17. Bxe5 and 18. Qxg6. Black's text move looks very risky, creating a hole on d5. Yet I'm now unable to find a convincing Black alternative. Black's move does have its pluses: tempo gain and the tactical threat to play ... c4, ... a6 and ... b5, trapping the light-squared bishop.

16. Nd5 Qd7 17. Bxe5!

There are a couple of reasonable alternatives, yet I believe this is best.

17. ... Nxe5

17. ... de ?? 18. Nf6+ drops the queen, and 17. ... Bxe5 18. f4 Bg7 19. f5! allows a big attack, so this seems forced also. Now Black seeks to exchange queens.

18. f4 Qg4 19. Qxg4! Nxg4 20. h5!!

Already Black must be confused. Down a pawn, I swapped queens. (I had no choice as the complications that arise after 19. Qf2 c4 do not clearly favor White.) Now I seem to have dropped the exchange also. Be honest. How many out there would not have preferred Black's position after 20. ... Nf2 ?

20. ... Nf2 21. hg!

My last move was one of the deepest moves I'd ever played. Now 21. h6 is an interesting move, but mine is far more accurate.

It's interesting to examine Black's choices here.

*Position after **21. hg !***

A. 21. ... hg 22. Ne7 mate

B. 21. ... fg; White has the pedestrian mate 22. Nf6++ Kh8 Rxh7 mate, and the more elegant mate 22. Ne7++ Kh8 23. Nxg6 mate

C. 21. ... Bd4 22. Rxh7! Rae8 23. Rxd4! +/-

D. 21. ... Rae8 (to stop Ne7+, trying to defend and give back the exchange if necessary.) 22. Rdg1!! Nxh1 23. ef+ Rxf7 24. Nf6+ Kf8 25. Nxe8 Re7 26. Nxg7 Rxg7 27. Rxh1 winning a piece.

E. 21. ... Nxh1 22. Ne7+ Kh8 23. Rxh1 h6 (forced) 24. gf. Here by OTB analysis concluded "and White has a strong attack". White threatens Ng6+ regaining the exchange. With my friend Steve Davis's help, we came up with the variation 24. ... Kh7 25. Be6 Bf6 26. Nd5 Bd4 27. c3 Bg7 28. f5! Be5 (forced; White was threatening f6 burying the bishop) 29. f6! and several computers agreed Black's king position was hopeless.

While these variations are not exhaustive, the reader can readily appreciate the general themes. Perhaps perplexed by all the vexing alternatives, Leo found a different and quicker way to lose.

21. ... Nxd1? 22. Ne7+ Kh8 23. Rxh7 mate.

I find it very curious that two of the prettiest games I have played in the last fifteen years should have come against the same opponent. And the similarities between the two games does not end there. 1.) The games both started with the same opening, although radically different lines. 2.) Both games were played without queens and featured reduced material. 3.) Both games were fantastically complex, especially given the material content. So both games required a lot of calculation. 4.) Both games, at some point, required me to be intuitive. There was a point where every response could not be calculated, and I simply had to trust my instincts.

I hope the readers of the *Antics* enjoyed this game and its analysis.

Practical Chess Advice *by Bill Melvin*

How do I improve at chess? I've heard this question 100 times if I've heard it once. The easy out is to answer: "Play and study." This is true. It also doesn't say anything. Surely there must be some tips with universal applicability. Here are some mistakes that I see often at chess tournaments. Most of these will apply for both scholastic and adult chess.

1. The player has three minutes left on his clock. His clock is ticking. He must make eleven more moves to make time control. His clock keeps ticking. He has one legal move which doesn't lead to mate in one or drop the queen with check. His clock is ticking. Advice? M O V E !!!

Ahem, that was easy. When you are in a situation where you have identified the only playable move in a position, you should instantly make this move. This especially applies to time pressure situations. Play the forced move and then analyze. Don't give your opponent free time and don't worry about might have beens. Yes, you might get mated by force after playing the move identified by process of elimination. Don't worry about it. If you only have one move, play the move and worry about getting checkmated later.

2. "I should have won." Have you ever heard this one? Have you ever played in a tournament and not uttered this at least once yourself? Well, no, you shouldn't have won. Obviously, you still had a chance to mess up or your opponent still had a chance to play brilliantly. Do your best and don't let up until the final result is posted on the wall.

3. "I'm having trouble figuring out which opening to play. I've tried the Albin Counter-Gambit, the Bogo-Indian Defense, the Latvian Gambit, Semi-Tarrasch in the Queen's Gambit Declined, Flohr-Zaitsev Ruy Lopez, and the Svesnikov Sicilian Defense. What should I play?" My answer is simple: "Er, just develop your pieces..." Here is a new rule of thumb: you should own fewer opening books than letters in the word Lucena until you fully understand Lucena's position. Most openings have variations which lead to positions whereby the only advantage is technical in nature. Without any endgame knowledge, such opening knowledge is wasted and frustrating. "The book says white is winning and I have an extra pawn..." Learn how to convert technical advantages and only then try and memorize the Encyclopedia of Chess Openings.

4. "I don't want to play. I'm protecting my rating. I don't play as well at this time control anyway." Okay, fine with me. Just don't call yourself a chess PLAYER. How about: "Former chess player who benefited from a statistical fluctuation and now desires only to possess a numerical strength estimate in excess of actual ability?" Okay, that was too harsh.

My advice? Don't get too interested in ratings. Study the formulas and you'll find out that the system is self-correcting. Play another 100 rated games. You'll discover that the initial rating before those games affects the final rating only a few points (probably less than 10). The system auto-corrects both up and down. Focus on improvement solely and the rating will take care of itself. A rating isn't something you 'protect.' Whatever you do, don't quit chess because of a silly number!

5. "I'm an advanced chess player. I plan to use a psychological trick on my opponent. I will slam my next move down extra hard..." What we have here is a blunder just about to happen! I would guess that approximately 80% of the slammed moves I've ever witnessed were absolute howlers. Furthermore, the opponent is shocked and suddenly concerned about losing. They inevitably study the position closely and come back with the strongest reply. Of course, they might think you are an idiot (and rightfully so!) and refuse to go over the game with you afterwards. I've seen or tried every psychological trick in the book. I honestly have to report that all of them backfire on the user. Well there is one trick which is annoying: Play strong moves. Now, THIS will worry your opponent.

6. "And they're off. Two minutes into the round and these kids are already setting the pieces back up. This looks like a close one. Who will get to the pairing sheet to post the result first? It is a close one. Player A won by 3 seconds. Oh well, there is always the next round..." Unfortunately, you don't get any extra points in scholastic chess for moving fast. Most games don't start with a clock on them, so there is actually no penalty for being extremely slow. While you don't want to stall, you do want to play a game to the best of your ability. In order to do this, you must play slow enough to see your mistakes before you move instead of after. Keeping score is great for this. I have one other tip: Try to move slower than your opponent. Learn to stay calm. Do not become impatient simply because your opponent is in a rush to finish.

A Tribute to Stuart Rachels

Stuart Rachels - The Greatest ?
by Kyle Therrell

I would like to share with *Antics* readers a few thoughts and recollections about Stuart Rachels. Maybe it's a good time for this - he has been gone from the Alabama chess scene for about a decade, so there must now be many players in the state who know little or nothing about his quite remarkable chess career. I want to convey some idea of my relationship with and games against him, as well as giving an overview of Stuart's chess achievements. Since I am writing from memory, naturally I cannot claim complete accuracy or comprehensiveness.

The question will arise, is Stuart the best chess player ever to come from Alabama? Well, we can't say he is the best Alabama native; he was born in New York City and his family moved to Birmingham (after living in Miami) when Stuart was about seven. My next thought was, maybe he is the best of all players who spent their formative years in Alabama - but then, Paul Morphy attended Spring Hill College in Mobile starting at age 13. Anyway, we can say that he is one of the best "Alabama players" ever, and the best of the modern era. Taking a broader view, it seems to me that Stuart is the best Southern player of the 20th century. (Excluded from consideration are clear-cut transplants such as GM Lubomir Kavalek of Virginia who grew up in Czechoslovakia.)

In the late 1970s, I was a teenage class A player who frequented the Birmingham Chess Club. One week when I was there I noticed two new players - a pair of young kids playing a rather spirited game of speed chess against each other. They turned out to be Stuart, aged 8 or 9, and his brother David, almost three years older. Not too long after that I was approached by their father James, a distinguished-looking fellow who was a professor and dean at UAB. Would I be interested in giving his sons chess lessons during the upcoming summer, he wanted to know. Sure, why not?

One thing I remember from those lessons was when I once gave Stuart a position to solve for "homework." He was trying to solve it in his head while we were in the elevator leaving the building. As for David, I don't think he was ever as serious about chess as Stuart, but I do think he was talented; he later reached about the 1700 level. Even in the "early days" when Stuart was learning from me, he didn't just take my word for everything. Occasionally, when he questioned my opinion of a move/position and I couldn't prove to his satisfaction that I was right, I would try to pre-empt further debate by saying, "Stuart, what is your rating?". It was perhaps predictable, given his great talent and "elephant-like" memory, that some years later that rhetorical question would be turned back on me.

It was sometime during 1979 (the same year as the summer lessons) that I played against Stuart in a tournament game for the first time. It was in the first round of a Birmingham tournament on Saturday morning. I was White. Judging by my fifth move, maybe I was still half-asleep: **1 e4 e6 2 d3 d5 3 Nd2 Nf6 4 Ngf3 Bc5?! 5 g3??** (5 e5 is certainly in order here. I decided to proceed with my reversed King's Indian idea, noting that 5 ...Ng4 would be no problem due to 6 d4) **de(!)** Now I had to wake up to the fact that I was a pawn down for nothing, since 6 Nxe4 drops the f-pawn after the knight exchange, and 6 de Ng4 is even worse. Mustering all my aplomb, I played **6 Ng5 ed 7 Bxd3** and tried to follow up with an attack on his king, which soon castled kingside. It shouldn't have amounted to much, but at some point Stuart

didn't find the right defense, and my attack crashed through. After his resignation, I made a heartfelt comment to him to the effect that he had thrown quite a scare into me. Later that year we decided to play a match. I suppose he thought it would be good experience; maybe I thought I would get a few rating points by crushing him. At that point he had been a tournament player for all of nine months and was almost a 1700 player, compared to my 1960 or so. Well, I won the match, but it was far from a shutout, and he gained a bunch of rating points.

Early the next year (1980), I started going to tournaments with Stuart, David, and Dr. Rachels (or Jimbo, as his sons and I came to call him). The elder Rachels, also a tournament player, eventually attained a rating of about 1900. Later on, Stuart and I would make some tournament trips with other chess friends such as Lamar Daniel and Mark Walton.

Having acquitted himself well in our match, it didn't take Stuart long to get his first win against me in a tournament. At the Queen of Hearts in February that year we were paired; I thought I had a clearly better position, but a tactical oversight allowed him to land a winning blow. I seem to recall that, at some point during that year, at the age of 10, his rating was 1824. In the summer, he won the right to play a match for the Birmingham championship against the reigning champ, Steve Hudson. I think Steve was also Alabama champion at the time; he had been one of the strongest players in the state for several years, and I didn't think he would have much trouble against the kid. Wrongo. Stuart won the match clearly. I was beginning to learn not to underestimate him, but as we will see, the lesson wasn't completely driven home until almost a decade later. 1981 was a big year; Stuart's rating reached the magic number of 2200.

This made him the youngest master in US history, at the age of 11 years and about 10 months. By comparison, Bobby Fischer was 13 when he became a master. (Stuart's record would stand for over a decade, until it was broken by Jordy Mont-Reynaud. The current holder is Vinay Bhat, at 10 years "and change.") Right around the time Stuart broke the record, I earned the right to play him a match for the city championship. I won narrowly, despite the fact that I was already playing up (I was rated 2120 to his 2200).

In the earlier years of Stuart's career, I was a kind of openings resource for him. He adopted as his usual repertoire pretty much the same lines I had been playing. During tournaments we were both playing in, he would often come up to me right after the pairings went up and say, "I'm playing so-and-so. What does he play?" or "What should I play?". Also, I became friends with Stuart and his brother David in more than just a chess sense, despite our differing ages. At some point, the three of us started playing tennis against each other. This continued for a few years to the point where Stuart and I played more tennis against each other than chess.

I'm thinking it was probably 1982 when Stuart joined the prestigious "Collins' Kids" chess team, playing against a team of kids from Iceland. (John Collins was a New York master who had been the teacher of Bobby Fischer as well as of other top American players such as Robert Byrne and William Lombardy.) It was also somewhere around that time that he appeared on "The Shelby Lyman Show," a public-TV series about chess named after its host, a New York master. Also that year he attended the American Chess School in New York, taught by GM Edmar Mednis. (Among his "classmates" was Patrick Wolff.) He tied (with me) for the Alabama championship, and began taking lessons from Boris Kogan. (Kogan, who had emigrated from the Soviet Union a couple of years before and settled in the Atlanta area, was a long-time chess trainer and a very strong International Master: I believe that, at his peak, Boris was ranked seventh in the US and number 100 in the world. Many of us in the "Southeast chess community" were shocked by Boris' death by cancer in 1993; he was 53.) Oh, and, I almost forgot, he tied for first at the US Junior Open, held in Crossville, Tennessee. Stuart was twelve; the other co-winner (David Gertler) was about 19.

The next year, 1983, Stuart was invited to and

played in his first of a number of US Junior (closed) championships. He reclaimed the Birmingham championship (from me) and, I believe, won the state title as well. I believe he held on to both titles through the next three years. Of course, he continued to win a number of other Alabama tournaments such as the Vulcan, Queen of Hearts, etc. In this period from 1983-1986 Stuart clearly dominated Alabama chess. He also got out to a big lead in our head-to-head record. In all, out of something like 60-70 tournament and match games between us, Stuart scored at least plus 15.

In 1984, Stuart played in the World Cadet (under 16) Championship in France. Among his opponents was Vassily Ivanchuk, who is now ranked about number 5 in the world. I also recall an international junior event in Israel around this time. (I remember that among the things Stuart brought back was a Coke can with printing in Hebrew. Just one of those little memories that stay with you, probably crowding out more important stuff.) For my part, in late 1984 I scored a rare victory against Stuart in a game I still consider my best. At that point, Stuart was rated about 2400 and it seemed that I had to be in top form to have a chance of beating him. Another of my lingering Stuart-related memories was an odd incident which I believe happened the next year, 1985. It was during one of the three games I can remember losing to him that year. My position was bad, and there was a threat of a back-rank mate. I decided that I should first exchange some pieces(!), and then create "Luft." So I took a piece, and while I was awaiting the "obvious" recapture, Stuart gave me a funny look and played rook down, mate. It seemed to me that Stuart had cast some kind of spell over my brain. Of course, the strength of his moves probably had something to do with it ...At any rate, I was apparently still Stuart's "openings consultant." That summer I received a phone call from Florida, where he was playing in the US Open. He wanted my opinion as to what line he should play against his next opponent: Boris Spassky. My input didn't seem to help much that time, though ...At the end of 1985, Stuart was rated in the vicinity of 2500. Somehow, I found my clearly best form to date from the end of the year through about mid-1986, performing at about 2500 for several consecutive tournaments. During this period I played Stuart three times. In each game I achieved an advantage, but the final result was three draws. Apparently, even my best play was no longer sufficient to beat him...

Stuart's tournament activity tapered off somewhat after he started college (Emory University in Atlanta) in 1987. I believe it was earlier that year, though, that he tied for second at one of the big opens, I believe the US Open. It was probably at that same tournament where, in the speed tournament held in conjunction with the main event, Stuart was placed in the same section as Walter Browne. Browne, a grandmaster who had been US champion six times, surveyed his section before the tournament started and said something like, "Do I get an extra prize if I win all my games?". How must Walter have felt when, in their mini-match, he lost by 2-0 to a 17-year-old from Alabama who was not even an IM? Stuart, I believe, went on to win the speed tournament.

The next year, Stuart broke through and won the 1988 US Junior Championship. He then went on to play in the World Junior, held in Australia. (That title was won by a 15-year-old from France named Joel Lautier, now a top GM.) Winning the US Junior meant that Stuart was seeded into the 1989 US Championship. I believe it was difficult for him to decide whether to accept his invitation; he was not trying to be a chess professional, and in order to play he would have to get time off from college. But, he decided that he had to go for it. To help spur himself on as he began preparing, he posted a rather humorous "top 10 list" of reasons he could win the title. I pitched in, helping to prepare openings. Before long, he was off to the tournament site in California.

On paper, Stuart was a clear choice to come in last. He was the only participant who wasn't at least an IM; the great majority were GMs. I felt that he would nonetheless outscore a few of those guys. But I was not really prepared for the postcard I would soon receive. At the time he sent the card, Stuart had played about half of his

games, and had not lost any. He scrawled on the postcard the entire score of his game against Lev Alburt, which Stuart had drawn easily as Black. Around move 15-20 he wrote something like, "Didn't we have this position on our board [during preparation]?". Then he listed the players he still had to play and commented, "But I am no longer afraid. Why should I be?". About a week later, I got a call one night from Dr. Rachels. He and Carol (his wife and Stuart's mother) were about to take a late-night drive to Atlanta to meet Stuart at the airport. You see, Stuart had finished (undefeated, with 4 wins) in a tie for first place with grandmasters Yasser Seirawan and Roman Dzindzichashvili. At that time, there was no tie-breaking at the US Championship, so the three were co-champions, including...the untitled 20-year-old college student from Alabama. Did I say untitled? Well, not any more - this performance gave Stuart the IM title, plus a GM norm. It also lifted his USCF rating over 2600 (it remains today at 2605). That year, the US Championship was also the FIDE Zonal qualifying tournament, so Stuart's shared first place entitled him to play in the 1990 Interzonal, the next stage in the world championship cycle. Well, he couldn't stop now. About 7 months later he was off to Manila, in the Philippines. Needless to say, this was quite a strong tournament. Among Stuart's opponents were Nigel Short (with whom I believe Stuart drew) and Michael Adams, against whom Stuart reached a winning position, but blundered and lost. (It happens to the best of 'em.) Stuart did quite respectably in the tournament, finishing one point below an even score.

In 1990 Stuart was able to play again in the US Championship. That year, it was held in a knock-out format consisting of two-game mini-matches. Stuart eliminated IM Michael Brooks in the first round, but was then knocked out by 1 1/2-1/2 in two close games against GM Nick DeFirmian. In 1991 Stuart relocated to England after receiving a Marshall Scholarship to attend Oxford University. During the next two years at Oxford he played a few times, including the traditional Oxford-Cambridge match. He also came back to play in the US Championship once more in 1992. I believe that in the round-robin field he scored exactly according to rating expectancy, which considering his "semi-retired" status was rather good. Close to the end of his stay in England, Stuart was invited by Nigel Short to come and spend a little time helping Short and his second, GM Jonathan Speelman, as they prepared for Short's then-upcoming world championship match against Kasparov. So he did.

In 1993 Stuart moved to Syracuse, New York, where he is now finishing a Ph.D. in philosophy at Syracuse University. I believe he played in a couple of local tournaments shortly after moving there, but hasn't played in a tournament in 4-5 years now. I am still in touch with him; he remains quite sharp, able for example to analyze openings and games over the phone without using a board. In the last year or so, two grandmasters visited Syracuse and played some speed games with Stuart. Each GM came out "second-best."

Bottom line, Stuart was/is a rare talent. His pure chess ability came together with other attributes such as an excellent memory and fierce competitiveness to produce an opponent you really didn't want to see across the board in that important last-round game. Or any other.

I am appending two games. The first is, I think, one of Stuart's better games against me from the "old days"; we were both Experts at the time. The second won a prize at the US Championship in which Stuart tied for first.

Huntsville Space City Open 1981
White: Kyle Therrell
Black: Stuart Rachels

1 e4 c5 2 c3 Nf6 3 e5 Nd5 4 d4 cxd4 5 Qxd4 e6 6 Nf3 Nc6 7 Qe4 d6 8 Nbd2 dxe5 9Nxe5 Nf6 10 Qa4 Qc7 11 Ndf3 Bd6 12 Nxc6 Bd7 13 Bg5 Bxc6 14 Bb5 Nd5 15 Nd4 0-0 16 Nxc6 bxc6 17 Bxc6 Nxc3 18 bxc3 Rac8 19 Bf3 Qxc3+ 20 Ke2 Qb2+ 21 Bd2 Rc2 22 Rad1 Bb4 23 Qd7 Ba5 24 Be4 Rd8 25 Qxd8+ Bxd8 26 Bxc2 Qxc2 27 Rb1 Bb6 28 Rhc1 Qe4+ 29 Be3 h6 30 Rb3 Bxe3 31 Rxe3 Qxg2 32 Rc8+ Kh7 33 Rc7 a5 34 Rxf7 Qxh2 35 Rxe6 Qh5+ 36 Rf3 Qb5+ 37 Rd3 Qc4

(continued at bottom of next page)

Stuart's First Tournament by Prof. James Rachels

When Stuart's older brother, David, taught him the moves, it was as though the 8-year-old's brain had been hard-wired for chess. He caught on instantly and from that moment on he wanted to do nothing but play. When he wasn't playing, he would pore over chess books, memorizing positions, solving problems, and making up problems of his own. Once when I arrived home from work, Stuart ran to the car carrying a huge board on which the pieces were balanced--there was a position he wanted to show me, and he couldn't wait until we got inside. I sat in the car, looking out the window at the board as he stood in the driveway explaining the moves. It wasn't long after this that we discovered he could play blindfold.

The Birmingham Chess Club met on Wednesday evenings at UAB, and Stuart looked forward all week to those meetings. Other than David, he was the only child there, and at first it wasn't clear to the adults that it was worth their time bothering with him. But Kyle Therrell, Ellis Jones, and Alan Todd helped him a lot. ("You should learn the French," said Alan.)

There were monthly tournaments in Birmingham, but no kids participated. So we decided to take David and Stuart to Atlanta for their first tournament. On January 6-7, 1979, Thad Rogers was running a scholastic section ("The Atlanta Scholastic Championship!") as a side-light to a big adult event. Unfortunately, only five kids showed up, but that was enough for four rounds. For the record, here is Stuart's first-ever tournament game:

ATLANTA SCHOLASTIC CHAMPIONSHIP
January 6, 1979
White: Stuart Rachels Black: Billy Kayma

1. P-K4, P-Q3 2. P-Q4, N-QB3 3. N-KB3, B-N5 4. B-K2, N-B3 5. N-B3, Q-Q2 6. O-O, O-O-O 7. B-K3, P-K4 8. P-Q5, N-QN5 9. P-QR3, N-R3 10. BxN, PxB 11. BxP, B-K2 12. Q-K2, P-B4 13. QxPch, Q-N2 14. QxQch, KxQ 15. N-QN5, R-R1 16. N-N5, RxB 17. KxR, KxN 18. NxBP, B-K7 19. NxR, BxR 20. KxB, NxKP 21. N-B7, N-Q7+ 22. K-K2, N-K5 23. P-QR4, P-N4 24. N-R6, B-B1 25. N-N4 P-R4 26. K-K3, PxN 27. KxN, B-K2 28. P-QB3, B-Q1 29. P-N4, PxP 30. PxP, B-N3 31. P-B3, PxP 32. PxP, B-Q4 33. R-QB1, B-N7 34. R-B7ch, K-R1 35. R-KN7, B-B8 36. R-N6, K-R2 37. RxQP, B-R6 38. R-Q7ch, K-R1 39. P-N5, K-N1 40. KxKP, K-B1 41. K-K6, K-N1 42. P-Q6, B-B4 43. R-Q8ch, K-N2 44. P-Q7, B-N3 45. R-KN8, P-N5 46. PxP, K-R2 47. P-Q8(Q)ch, BxQ 48. RxB 1-0

Stuart won his four games and took home a trophy and a provisional rating of 1496. He was nine years old. This was his first and last scholastic event. The following month he played in the Queen of Hearts in Montgomery and made an even score, showing that he could compete with the grown-ups. Two-and-a-half years later he made master.

38 Re5 Qxa2+ 39 Ke3 a4 40 Ra5 Qc4 41 Ra8 Qb4 42 Ra6 Qc5+ 43 Ke2 h5 44 f3 h4 45 Kd2 Qb4+ 46 Ke3 h3 47 Rd4 Qe1+ 48 Kf4 0-1.

That queen was pretty annoying.

About the next game, GM Chris Ward in his book "Winning with the Dragon" comments that White got a taste of his own medicine. (In the Dragon it is usually White who castles long and pursues this kind of kingside attack.)

Long Beach ch-US 1989
White: GM Sergey Kudrin
Black: FM Stuart Rachels

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 d6 6 g3 g6 7 Nde2 Bd7 8 Bg2 Qc8 9Nd5 Bg7 10 0-0 Nxd5 11 exd5 Ne5 12 a4 Bh3 13 Ra2 h5 14 Bxh3 Qxh3 15 f3 g5 16 Kh1 Bf6 17 b3 Qf5 18 Nd4 Qg6 19 c4 g4 20 Rg2 h4 21 gxh4 Rxh4 22 f4 Nd7 23 Nb5 0-0-0 24 Nxa7+ Kb8 25 Be3 Rdh8 26 Qe1 g3 27 Qa5 Rxh2+ 28 Rxh2 Qe4+ 29 Kg1 Qxe3+ 0-1

A Night with Stuart Rachels: A Humbling Experience

by Andrew Whatley

I have always wanted to meet Stuart Rachels and I was overjoyed when Lamar Daniel took me to see him on my 15th birthday, July 24, 1996. When I met Stuart, he was playing a game with Mark Walton (MG). From watching I could tell that the game was near the end, with Stuart having the majority of the pieces. Stuart and MG were cracking jokes left and right and I could tell immediately that Stuart was not only a good chessplayer but also a great guy. Still I was skeptical that Start was true GM strength after 7 years away from tournaments. I was soon convinced. After the game with MG, our group (Lamar Daniel , Stuart, MG , Kyle Therrell, and I) went for pizza. Lamar suggested that I play Stuart with 5 minutes to 1 minute time odds. Lamar told me that Stuart was incredibly fast but I thought if Stuart could beat me with this kind of disadvantage it would be amazing. I had made master a few months before, and the only other experience I had with 5 to 1 odds was with Seirawan who beat me rather soundly, but that was when I was only 1800. Not knowing what to expect, but giving Stuart some credit considering his strength and his White pieces, I played my tournament line against him with Black. Stuart never flinched and played very quickly, sacrificing a pawn on about move 13. At this point I had forgotten the line and slowly watched my king as it walked. With a good twenty or so seconds left and after about 25-30 moves, Stuart mated me. I was stunned and doubted no more. Stuart then started telling interesting riddles which for the most part baffled us, but we had a great time.

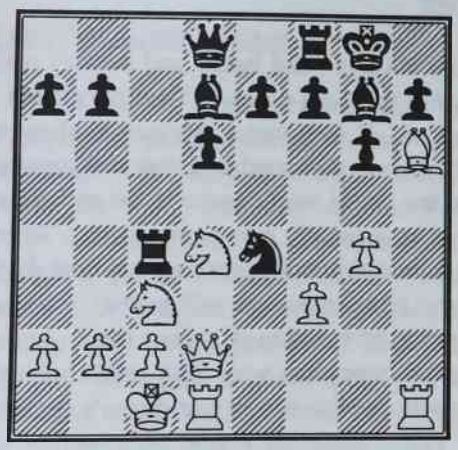
By this time Stuart had proved that he was the best in orthodox chess. The only remaining challenge was bughouse chess, which really is my favorite of all games! It wasn't long until I realized that Start also dominated in 'bug'. Our group comprised some of the best bug players in the state, and with any given 'pard' Stuart won almost all of his games. I remember asking myself, "How does he do that?" He was just so fast and so good. When it came time for me to be his partner I was thrilled. I played some bad moves the first two games and even Stuart could not win because of my blunders. We won the next eight games, though, as Stuart adjusted to my style and I blundered less. (Since then, I have played nearly 3000 bughouse games on the internet.) With Stuart's incredible speed, I would certainly consider him to be one of the top 5-10 bughouse players in the world.

When the bughouse session was over, it was almost midnight and we needed to leave soon. However, Lamar let me play one last 5 to 1 blitz game with Stuart. This time I was White and felt very good. I played the first 15 or so moves and had a slight edge over Stuart, who had misplayed the opening a little. But I soon became a little restless and mistakenly castled queenside. Within 10-15 moves I resigned. Stuart had exploited my small weakness, turning it into a gaping hole, and again had 20-25 seconds to spare.

I left that night very impressed with Stuart. I had previously heard that Anand had asked him to be one of Anand's trainers because a letter that Stuart had written to Anand about Kasparov's weaknesses. Coupled with the already well known fact that Stuart became a master at age 11 (!) and was the U.S. Co-Champion in 1989 at the age of 19, I was overwhelmed. I then realized that the rising stars in Alabama today (Matthew Puckett, Andy Reeder, Daniel Thomas, John Morcos, and especially myself) could never really compare with Stuart, who, with the exception of Fischer, is probably the best youngster the United States has seen in the past 50 years.

Stuart and the Sicilian
by Lamar Daniel

Having spent most of my chess playing days sponging my openings off Stuart and Kyle, it gives me special pleasure to be able to show you the following game. It was played after Stuart had shown me this variation a few weeks before: **1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cd 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 g6 6. Be3 Bb7 7. f3 Nc6 8. Qd2 O - O 9. Bc4 Bd7 10. O - O - O Rc8 11. Bb3 Ne5 12. h4 Nc4 13. Bxc4 Rxc4 14. h5 Nxh5 15. g4 Nf6 16. Bh6 Nxe4 !!**



This is the move Stuart found in the (at that time) new book by GM Miles on the Dragon Variation. There could follow lines like **17. fxN Rxd4 18. Qh2 Rxd1+ 19. Nxd1 e6 20. Bxb7 Qg5+ Kb1 21. Kxb7 Qxh7+ Kf6** winning for Black. All of this is in any opening book, I'm not going to give it all here. After Stuart showed this to me I went home and looked in my old Dragon book by Levy. Sure enough, it gave a different line: instead of **17. fxN**, White can play **17. Qh2 Rxd4 18. Bxb7 Rxd1+ 19. Nxd1 Kxg7** and this time White has a perpetual check: **20. Qxh6+! Kf6 21. Qf4+** etc.

Perpetual check playing Stuart ... yes !!!! We played in the State Championship a few weeks later and sure enough, the first 16 moves were played exactly as above in under two minutes. On move **17. Qh2** I'll always remember the look on Stuart's face. He spent around an hour on his next move, successfully finding the drawing line given above. His first words after the game were "Is this theory ???" It's not often you get to play Stuart and only use five minutes for your side of the game to his hour.

After this Stuart put in a new rule for us: If he shows a new move in a variation, we can't play it against each other in rated games. This worked great for two years, until we played in another State Championship, this one in Mobile. We sat down to play. I had found a line in PCN (that's Players Chess News to you youngsters). We played around 14 moves when I played **15. Ra5**. Stuart got a weird expression on his face. I thought: could this be *that* good ??? Stuart leaned forward and said "Lamar, we agreed not to play stuff we looked at together". I had forgotten that we had analyzed **15. Ra5** long ago. I was going to resign, but Stuart said, "Just play". I decided on **15. e5** and lost badly.

For many years Stuart and I have been good friends. When he won the U.S. Championship I was very impressed, but it wasn't the most impressive thing I've seen him do. We went to the Fairfield Glade a month or so later and Stuart was frequently approached by strangers with silly questions such as "How do you play the Sicilian Defense", presumably to be answered in 20 words or less. He treated each such query with genuine interest as if the request was important to him. Bear Bryant would say "he showed class". I learned that how Stuart plays chess isn't the most impressive thing about him. He is that kind of person.

Scholastic Section

Chess Parents

Tournament Day

Chess Parents Article #3

By: Thomas H Young, Jr.

This is the third in a series of articles about what being a "chess parent" means. This month's article, recognizing that most scholastic Alabama Chess Federation members participate in at least a few tournaments during their membership, focuses on preparing for tournaments.

Every child is different. There, I've said it. We all recognize it. There is no "magic formula" that will work for everyone. If there were a "winning method," we'd all know it and there would still be no advantage for any child. Or, the secret would be VERY expensive and someone would own the patent and be getting very rich. Well, neither of those scenarios is the case.

So, if there's not a magic formula, why write this article? Why, indeed? You know your child like no one else. And, up to a certain age (perhaps fifth or sixth grade), it may be up to you to provide the motivation for your child to "prepare" for each tournament. Let's take a few minutes to examine the different things that might work for you and your child.

Social Chess

Your child's main motivation for attending tournaments is to see their friends. It's a social occasion and the competition takes a backseat. The social chess player needs no preparation. If they've played a few games recently, that's enough. The social player will either change to one of the other types or eventually quit playing, and that's OK. Chess can be a social experience and the child will learn something anyway.

Laissez Faire

Your child is "laid back" and doesn't really seem to care whether they win or lose. They play chess because it's a fun game. If they win a few games along the way, great...if they never win another game, well maybe it's not "great" but the world won't come to an end either. This type of child is generally non-competitive. Tournament-style chess is probably not something you will do often. If you do attend tournaments, it will probably be because a sibling is going or because it's your idea. Laissez faire players are not happy for very long at tournaments. The competitive nature of the event just doesn't appeal to them.

Just a note...I know some adults, particularly educators, which don't believe that chess is a competitive "sport"...well, it is. Many players are very competitive and get emotionally involved with the game. There is definitely a cerebral side of the game that teaches logic and thinking skills, but without the desire to win (meaning a competitive spirit), what's the point in playing the game?

Middle of the Road (MOR)

The MOR player cares about winning and losing that is assured. They would like to be in the "top tier" of players, but needs work to get there. They don't have the natural abilities of some players. This is probably one of the top two problems that players (and parents of players) face. If your child is very young, and you'll have to be the judge of the definition of that phrase, it may be up to you to decide if they have the potential and real desire to be a

top-tier player. The MOR player will need to study puzzles, play games, and play over their old games to prepare for a tournament. In the days and weeks preceding a tournament, the MOR player should begin reviewing their previous games. Of course, this assumes that the player is recording their games. If they can't or won't record their games, then you'll have to help even more.

Which presumes another fact...do you play chess? Does someone else in your family play chess? If you watch your child play a game, can you REALLY tell what constitutes a poor move? Do you really know what constitutes an excellent move? If you don't play chess and no one else in your family plays either, then you have two choices: 1) Start studying and try to stay ahead of your offspring or 2) Look elsewhere for help. More about that later...

Good and Not Gettin' Better

GNGB players have a natural talent for chess. When they began playing the game, they enjoyed instant success. They may have even won some trophies along the way. But, they've gone from doing really well in tournaments, to good performances, to mediocre finishes. It's like the world "passed them by." You, as their parent, have been asking yourself, "What happened?" And, yes, the GNGB cares about winning. The difference is, success came so easily so early that they never learned about "working." This type of player must begin studying. Just playing games will not be enough for the GNGB player. The best method is to begin having them record their games and then review them afterwards. Just look for different moves that might have been better. Explore possibilities. DON'T be critical...just suggest alternatives. Among other things, this provides a really neat opportunity to spend some "face time" with your child, with no distractions. And, they'll learn that there is more than one way to look at a situation. This type of player may be absolutely adamant that they don't need to study. They are probably the most difficult to motivate, but they have huge potential

Young Bobby Fisher

YBF players are very competitive. Anyone that falls into this category is probably already studying. They are also probably recording their games. If you (the parent) are an experienced chess player, with a much higher rating than your offspring, it seems clear that you can continue to help them along. You know what's required. But, if you don't have that luxury, you need to find a program for your child. Every major city in this state has at least one person that's "qualified" to teach. I can't pretend to give you a list of everyone that could mentor/coach/teach your child. And, furthermore, hiring a private chess coach is GOING to cost money. That also doesn't guarantee that you can even find someone willing to teach or with an opening in their teaching schedule. An alternative is to find a program at a school or library to get your child into. I know of at least 3 separate scholastic programs in the Birmingham area that offers this type of arrangement. Some of the chess clubs in the major cities would be willing to help you also. If your "young Fisher" falls into this category, be sure to provide lots of opportunities to compete. And, be a cheerleader...be their biggest fan.

Caring Parent – Chess Patzer

If you aren't an experienced player, you need to evaluate your situation. If you're child is a relative beginner, you may be able to begin studying chess theory, openings, middle-games, and end-games and be able to "stay ahead" of them. But, if you don't love the game of chess, it may be very tedious to try this approach and frankly, the chances of staying ahead of a motivated child aren't very high. Otherwise, see the alternatives under Young Bobby Fisher. Weaker or newer players should probably look for a good scholastic program. A chess coach will expect more than an inexperienced player can deliver. If you can't locate a scholastic program in your area, START ONE. I know of two start-up programs that have been successful. There is lots of information available on the best way to get started. (If you are interested in starting a program, contact me and I'll give you the information that I have.)

Finally, if your child is lucky enough to be involved in a scholastic chess program, don't forget to thank the person that is running that program. Without exception, these folks are volunteers who spend hours and hours of time helping your child get better at this glorious game. If they didn't love the game and love kids, there are at least 100 other ways they could spend their time. In fact, don't just thank them once...do it loudly and often.

1998 Holy Spirit Scholastic Chess Tournaments

by Bill Melvin

A single word is incapable of describing the emotions which go into a chess tournament. Hope, fear, frustration, confidence, elation, and fatigue are only the beginning. The emotions are different for the player, coach, parent, organizer, and tournament director. Thus, it is only natural that my views of the Holy Spirit Scholastic chess tournament held January 17, 1998 may be quite different from others in attendance.

From an organizational standpoint, this event did not go well at all. Rounds were late, players who pre-registered were left out of the computer, and the computer refused to make a pairing in the K-3 section in the last round (twice locking up and corrupting the data). As chief TD, I'll take responsibility for everything which went wrong with this event. I learned plenty and plan to make different mistakes next time. Sorry!

From a player standpoint, this event was a lot of fun. The competitors were tolerant of the tardy round starts and seemed to enjoy the chance to play rivals in a nice setting. Having basketball, foosball, a playground, and food close at hand made the event joyful. My son Miles had a blast. He has a new friend from Birmingham now and enjoyed playing with him all day. Curiously, they didn't play chess!

From a parent/coach viewpoint, I can only guess. I've never been showered with so much sympathy/praise after a tournament. We really tried our best and the people in charge of bringing the players seemed to understand. They were tolerant of the late starts (maybe more than they should have been) and had a nice waiting area while their children enjoyed playing chess.

This tournament had its moments. Here are some of the most vivid memories for me:

1. In the most interesting organizational goof in a while, an unrated in the K-3 section was paired at an 1198 rating. This rating was a full 300 points above the board 2 player in the section. Statistically, this player should beat his closest competitor a full 7 games out of 8. True to form, he demolished his first two opponents and seemed to deserve this loftiest of ratings. When we discovered the mistake and posted his rating as unrated, he promptly lost the next game. The punch line? 1198 was his USCF membership expiration date!

2. Frank Brown was my assistant in the tournament room and has a heart of gold. We had an unusually high number of kids in the K-3 section get upset and start to cry. Frank always came over and gave them a big hug. His enthusiasm and caring was a big inspiration to me. Two episodes stand out:

One boy lost his second game in about 5 moves and 3 minutes. He was crying and Frank gave him a hug and asked him about his problem. The boy said that he lost his first game the same way. This sad story has a happy ending: the boy won his last three games!

Two sisters played in one round. The power of sibling rivalry should not be underestimated and this was undoubtedly the hardest fought game of the entire tournament. It is reported that one sister was called a "cry baby" during this match. Sisters can be tough.

3. We had some opening moves which have never been attempted in a chess tournament. It seems that one player thought that bishops and queens could jump over their own pieces. It appears that his first two opponents did not know to correct him. He 'won' his first two games quickly. The final position of his second game was atrocious as he had both bishops and his queen in the middle of the board delivering checkmate without a pawn being moved. I was so disturbed at seeing the final position that I made them replay the game without bishops and queens jumping pieces. I don't think this one is covered in the rulebook.

The K-12 Section was won by Ari Friedman with 4.5 points. His draw was with top rated David Sloan who also had 4.5 points but slightly worse tiebreaks. Their performance was solid and they were the only unbeaten players in the section. Third place with 4 points went to Taylor Curtis. Fourth place went to B.J. Ross with 3 points and a better tiebreak than R.B. Clay who finished fifth with 3 points. Pasha Minallah took the top unrated trophy with 3 points. James Berryman tied for fourth-seventh place but lost out on tiebreaks.

Mountain Brook destroyed the competition and easily captured top team honors in the K-12 section with 16 team points. Second place went to Stone Middle with 7 team points. Third place went to Huntsville High with 3 team points. Interestingly, the Huntsville High team consisted of just B.J. Ross. His tiebreaks were better than Indian Springs which also consisted of a one person team named Pasha Minallah.

The K-6 Section was heavily contested with no margin for error. Ethan Balch won the 38 player section with a perfect 5-0 score. Ethan was the pre-tournament rating favorite and he definitely showed that he is still improving. Following Ethan, there was a five way tie for second place with 4 points. Second place honors went to Joe Chaffee. Third place to Jonathan Thigpen. Fourth place to Lewis Lehe. Fifth place to David Hall. Although sixth place was not supposed to receive a prize, it seemed unnatural not to reward a 4 point performance. So, organizer Ed Meehan decided to give a sixth place trophy to John Gipson. Top unrated prize went to Robert Matroni with 3 points.

The K-6 team competition was the closest among the three sections. Advent Episcopal took top team honors with 15 team points. Holy Spirit captured second place with 12.5 team points. The third place team with 11.5 points was Randolph.

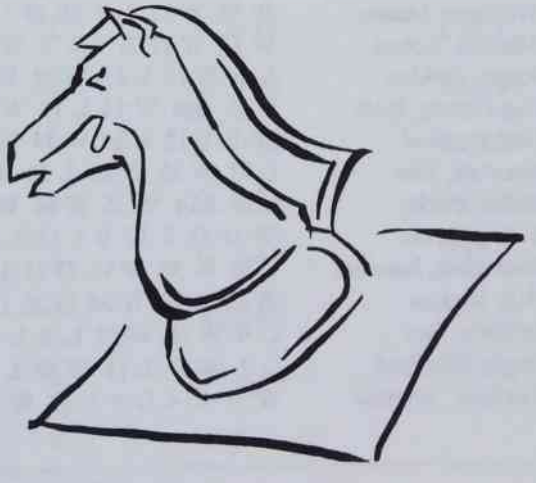
The K-3 section also saw a perfect 5-0 score with Sarah Boyd. As a father of two girls, it made me proud to watch the high quality last round game between Sarah and Uche Afrika. Each of these girls had perfect scores going into the last round and are shining beacons for Alabama chess. We had a three way tie for second with 4 points. Second place was won by Andrew Chandler. Third place went to Adam Cohen. Fourth place went to Uche Afrika. With 3.5 points, Gregory Smith captured fifth place honors. The top unrated prize was won by Libby Musgrave with 3 points. She beat out Will Battle, Cameron Mortanzavi, and Chris Shumate on tiebreaks.

Advent Episcopal took top K-3 team honors with 14 team points. This school took home two first place team trophies and should be congratulated on an obviously successful scholastic program. Second place in K-3 went to Holy Spirit with 10 team points. Third place in K-3 went to South Shades Crest.

The tournament was organized by Ed Meehan. I was the chief TD and was ably assisted by David Hayes and Frank Brown. David ran the computer and should be commended for keeping his cool at the eye of the storm. Mary Francis Thomas did a remarkable job controlling the chaos of registration and Huntsville Chess Club President Jerry Wheeler was available everywhere as needed. Members of the Huntsville Chess Club including Daniel Thomas and Bill Savoie were on hand to analyze games. All in all, we had an excellent staff.

The volunteers which provided food in the cafeteria were upbeat and an asset to the tournament. The proceeds raised from the food service are going toward sending Holy Spirit chess players to a national tournament. This is worthy indeed.

Finally, the Holy Spirit staff was most supportive in lending their top class facility. Special thanks go to the janitors who had a lot of extra work cleaning up.



1998 Holy Spirit Scholastic Crosstables

K - 12 Crosstable

1	Friedman, Ari	W 5 W 9 W 3 D 2 W 4
2	Sloan, David	W 12 W 8 W 4 D 1 W 6
3	Curtis, Taylor	F+15 W 10 L 1 W 8 W 9
4	Ross, William	W 7 W 6 L 2 W 5 L 1
5	Clay, RB	L 1 W 11 W 9 L 4 W 8
6	Minallah, Pasha	W 11 L 4 W 13 W 12 L 2
7	Berryman, James	L 4 L 13 W 14 W 10 W 12
8	Thigpen, Joshua	W 14 L 2 W 10 L 3 L 5
9	Parden, David	bye L 1 L 5 W 13 L 3
10	Free, Ryan	W 13 L 3 L 8 L 7 W 14
11	Kumar, Manoj	L 6 L 5 L 12 W 14 W 13
12	Barr, Willie	L 2 D 14 W 11 L 6 L 7
13	Hill, Taylor	L 10 W 7 L 6 L 9 L 11
14	King, Sharon	L 8 D 12 L 7 L 11 L 10
15	Jones, Robert	F- 3 WD

K - 6 Crosstable

1	Balch, Ethan	W 23 W 5 W 12 W 4 W 2
2	Chaffee, Joe	W 27 W 29 W 10 W 3 L 1
3	Thigpen, Jonathan	W 14 W 11 W 25 L 2 W 10
4	Lehe, Lewis	W 22 W 24 W 13 L 1 W 7
5	Hall, David	W 37 L 1 W 28 W 13 W 11
6	Gipson Jr, John	L16 W33 W 24 W 22 W 12
7	Pearce, Forrest	W 36 D 19 W 8 W 25 L 4
8	Gerrity, Jack	W 31 D 9 L 7 W 34 W 20
9	Bryant, John	W 28 D 8 L 19 W 29 W 21
10	Rozsa, Andrew	W 15 W 26 L 2 W 17 L 3
11	Chandler, Nathanael	W 18 L 3 W 23 W 15 L 5
12	Williams, Mason	W 30 W 16 L 1 W 19 L 6
13	Matroni, Robert	W 17 W 21 L 4 L 5 W 27
14	Nagle, Jacklyn	L 3 W 18 L 15 W 32 W 26
15	Funderburg, Kurt	L 10 bye W 14 L 11 W 25
16	Harkey, Brad	W 6 L 12 L 20 W 33 W 23
17	Beenken, Tim	L 13 W 32 W 27 L 10 W
18	Baltar, Bobby	L 11 L14 W 35 W 24 W 22
19	Young, Jason	W 34 D 7 W 9 L 12 L 17
20	Rodriguez, Juanluis	L 26 W 30 W 16 D 21 L 8
21	Hall, Nathan	W 32 L 13 W 34 D 20 L 9
22	Jedlovec, Ben	L 4 W 38 W 29 L 6 L 18
23	Nagle, Elizabeth	L 1 W 37 L 11 W 30 L 16
24	Kirchner, Andrew	W 38 L 4 L 6 L 18 W 32
25	Petroff, Peter	W 33 bye L 3 L 7 L 15
26	Williams, Jabar	W 20 L 10 L 33 W 28 L 14
27	Funderburg, Eric	L 2 W 35 L 17 W 36 L 13
28	Brown, ET	L 9 W 31 L 5 L 26 W 36
29	Watts, John Stanley	W 35 L 2 L 22 L 9 W 33
30	Mckee, Cory	L 12 L 20 W 31 L 23 W 34
31	Henry, Thomas	L 8 L 28 L 30 D 35 W 37
32	Sloan, Peter	L 21 L 17 W 37 L 14 L 24
33	Yerabandi, Kishan	L 25 L 6 W 26 L 16 L 29
34	Antonison, Angelina	L 19 W 36 L 21 L 8 L 30
35	Mccraw, Ellis	L 29 L 27 L 18 D 31 D 38
36	Eldridge, Kayla	L 7 L 34 W 38 L 27 L 28
37	Kibler, Tonya	L 5 L 23 L 32 W 38 L 31
38	Williams, Darius	L 24 L 22 L 36 L 37 D 35

K - 3 Crosstable

1	Boyd, Sarah	W 9 W 17 W 8 W 14 W 4
2	Chandler, Andrew	W 16 W 6 W 3 L 4 W 8
3	Cohen, Adam	W 14 W 11 L 2 W 7 W 6
4	Afrika, Uche	bye W 15 W 7 W 2 L 1
5	Smith, Gregory	L 6 D 21 W 10 W 19 W 12
6	Musgrave, Libby	W 5 L 2 W 17 W 11 L 3
7	Melvin, Miles	W 24 W 12 L 4 L 3 W 16
8	Battle, Will	W 20 W 18 L 1 W 16 L 2
9	Mortanzavi, Cameron	L 1 L 10 W 22 W 18 W 15
10	Shumate, Chris	L 15 W 9 L 5 W 17 W 19
11	Brown, Montgomery	W 23 L 3 W 19 L 6 W 14
12	Williams, Lucas	D 19 L 7 W 20 W 13 L 5
13	Jedlovec, Phillip	bye L 19 W 21 L 12 W 20
14	Fletcher, Robert	L 3 W 23 W 18 L 1 L 11
15	Hall, Elizabeth	W 10 L 4 L 16 W 23 L 9
16	Guina, Byran	L 2 W 24 W 15 L 8 L 7
17	Meehan, Maggie	bye L 1 L 6 L 10 W 23
18	Kirchner, Christopher	W 21 L 8 L 14 L 9 W 22
19	Scott, Elizabeth	D 12 W 13 L 11 L 5 L 10
20	Shattuck, Thomas	L 8 D 22 L 12 W 21 L 13
21	Oberle, David	L 18 D 5 L 13 L 20 bye
22	Kessler, Andrew	bye D 20 L 9 F+24 L 18
23	Petroff, Kathleen Rose	L 11 L 14 W 24 L 15 L 17
24	Petroff, Bridget	L 7 L 16 L 23 F-22 WD

1998 Pressman All-American Chess Team

by Jack C. Mallory

The 1998 All-American team, sponsored by the Pressman Toy Corporation, has selected 56 outstanding young players, five of whom (8.9%) are Alabamians. Our All-Stars are Matthew Puckett, Meridianville; Andrew Whatley, Pike Road; Daniel Thomas, Huntsville; Andy Reeder, Tuscaloosa; and John Morcos, Birmingham. Look at the following table to see how impressive this really is!

	State	USCF Members*	All-Stars	% of membership	Members per All-Star
1	Alabama	811	5	0.62	162
2	Vermont	345	1	0.29	345
3	Nevada	798	2	0.25	399
4	New Hampshire	560	1	0.18	560
5	New Jersey	3599	6	0.17	600
6	Ohio	2119	3	0.142	706
7	New York	8644	12	0.14	720
8	North Carolina	1502	2	0.13	751
9	Florida	3828	4	0.10	957
10	Maryland	2091	2	0.096	1045
11	California	8920	8	0.09	1115
12	Minnesota	1193	1	0.083	1193
13	Connecticut	1243	1	0.080	1243
14	Kentucky	1313	1	0.076	1313
15	Pennsylvania	3735	2	0.053	1868
16	Tennessee	1930	1	0.052	1930
17	Arizona	2059	1	0.048	2059
18	Massachusetts	2320	1	0.043	2320
19	Michigan	2432	1	0.041	2432
20	Texas	5331	1	0.019	5331
21-50	All other states		0	0	-

* January 31, 1998

South of the Saltline

by Jack C. Mallory

The Mobile-Baldwin County Chess League has completed its 28th year of interscholastic competition with Murphy High School winning the championship. The Alabama School of Mathematics and Science, our 1996 champions, finished second. Five of the 18 competing schools were middle schools. Bay Minette Middle School tied for third place in the Championship A Team section, and Christ the King Middle School won both the B Team and the C Team sections! Thomas Elmes of Murphy and Chad Wilbanks of Phillips Preparatory School tied for the Most Valuable Player Award. The League met once each month for six months during the 1997-8 school year with schools fielding five player A, B and C Teams. The six sessions averaged 160 players.

Mobile - Baldwin County Chess League 1997-98 "A" Teams

	School	rd 1	rd 2	rd 3	rd 4	rd 5	rd 6	Score
1	Clark	W 10	L 6	W 4	W 9	D 2	L 5	3.5
2	ASMS	W 11	W 7	W 5	D 3	D 1	W 9	5
3	Murphy	W 12	W 8	W 6	D 2	W 5	W 7	5.5
4	Phillips	D 13	W 11	L 1	L 15	L 21	W 19	2.5
5	Fairhope	FW 14	W 9	L 2	W 8	L 3	W 1	4
6	Robertsdale	W 15	W 1	L 3	L 7	W 17	L 11	3
7	Mcgill-Toolen	FW 16	L 2	W 12	W 6	W 8	L 3	4
8	Daphne	W 17	L 3	W 13	L 5	L 7	W 21	3
9	Rain	FW 18	L 5	W 17	L 1	W 10	L 2	3
10	Foley	L 1	L 13	bye	FW 19	L 9	L 15	2
11	Bay Minette	L 2	L 4	W 20	W 12	W 15	W 6	4
12	BCH	L 3	W 15	L 7	L 11	FW 13	W 17	3
13	UMS - Wright	D 4	W 10	L 8	L 21	FL 12	L 20	1.5
14	Davidson	FL 5	WD	--	--	--	--	0
15	Christ King	L 6	L 12	W 19	W 4	L 11	W 10	3
16	Corpus Christi	FL 7	WD	--	--	--	--	0
17	Shaw	L 8	W 19	L 9	W 20	L 6	L 12	2
18	Vigor	FL 9	WD	--	--	--	--	0
19	Foley Inter.	U	L 17	L 15	FL 10	L 20	L 4	0
20	Baker	U	bye	L 11	L 17	W 19	W 13	3
21	Leflore	U	U	FW	W 13	W 4	L 8	3

W = win, L = loss, D = draw, U = unplayed,
FW = forfeit win, FL = forfeit, W = withdrawn

Vulcan Open Chess Tournament

plus the Alabama State G/10 Championship

Both are Heart of Dixie Tour Events!

When
23-24 May 1998
Location
University of Alabama at Birmingham Education Building, Room 133

Format
Four Round SS in 3 sections: Open, Reserve (U1800), Novice (U1400)
Registration
8 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. 23 May 1997
Entry Fees
$35 postmarked by 5 May. $40 on site. USCF and ACF Membership Required (available on site, other states OK).
Rounds
Saturday: 10 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Sunday: 9 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
Time Controls
30/1, then SD/1
Prizes:
Prize Fund (First place in all 3 sections guaranteed; others based on 40)

Open Section		Reserve Section		Novice Section	
1st	- $300	1st	- $200	1st	- $100
2nd	- $150	2nd	- $ 70	2nd	- $ 50
Expert	- $150	B	- $ 50	D	- $ 40
A	- $100	C	- $ 50	E	- $ 40
				UNR	- $ 40

Side event
Alabama State G/10 Championship Saturday 7:30-9:30 p.m., 4-SS, Entry Fee: $10. $140 Guaranteed Prize Fund ($80-40-20). Registration 6:30-7:00 p.m. This is a separate Heart of Dixie Tour Event.
Entries
Send Entries with checks made payable to the Birmingham Chess Club to:
Kenneth Sloan

Questions
Kenneth Sloan

Open Setcion - 26th Annual Queen of Hearts - Feb. 14-15, 1998*										
#	Player	prev	perf	post	1	2	3	4	5	Tot
1	Stephen A. Muhammad	2411	2437	2418	W 6	W 4	D 3	W 7	W 2	4.5
2	Andrew W Whatley	2285	2369	2294	Wbye	W 9	W 8	W 5	L 1	4.0
3	Bill Melvin	2237	2325	2252	W 19	W 16	D 1	W 8	D 5	4.0
4	Rory Cahoon	1974	2170	2009	W 15	L 1	W 19	W 11	W 10	4.0
5	Richard W Frye	2079	2246	2110	W 20	W 10	W 7	L 2	D 3	3.5
6	Alan Todd	1854	2082	1898	L 1	W 18	W 22	W 16	D 9	3.5
7	A. J. Goldsby	2234	2063	2217	W 12	W 17	L 5	L 1	W 21	3.0
8	Andy Reeder	2161	2087	2153	W 23	W 11	L 2	L 3	W 13	3.0
9	Robert F. Pruitt	2024	2025	2024	W 24	L 2	Dbye	W 18	D 6	3.0
10	Tim Bond	1920	1911	1918	W 25	L 5	W 21	W 20	L 4	3.0
11	Kenneth Sloan	1839	1883	1850	W 22	L 8	W 15	L 4	W 18	3.0
12	Caesar W. Lawrence	1830	1947	1849	L 7	W 26	L 16	W 25	W 20	3.0
13	Rhodes Peele	1900	1774	1878	L 18	D 24	W 23	Dbye	L 8	2.5
14	James L. Richardson	1704	1766	1716	L 16	L 19	W 26	D 15	W 25	2.5
15	Roy F. Stanton	1668	1733	1682	L 4	W 23	L 11	D 14	W 22	2.5
16	Jace A. Etienne	1961	1906	1951	W 14	L 3	W 12	L 6	F	2.0
17	Ray Downs	1936	1761	1913	W 26	L 7	L 20	Dbye	F	2.0
18	Uwe H. Frischmuth	1888	1788	1838	W 13	L 6	W 24	L 9	L 11	2.0
19	John A. Perciballi	1813	1774	1800	L 3	W 14	L 4	L 21	W 26	2.0
20	Ross Owen Smith	1752	1811	1763	L 5	W 25	W 17	L 10	L 12	2.0
21	James R. Bowen	1659	1856	1674	Dbye	Dbye	L 10	W 19	L 7	2.0
22	Fred E. Wood	1374	1571	1393	L 11	Wbye	L 6	W 24	L 15	2.0
23	Jack P. Gwin	1774	1589	1733	L 8	L 15	L 13	D 26	D 24	1.0
24	Patrick R. Alford	1723	1542	1688	L 9	D 13	L 18	L 22	D 23	1.0
25	Richard S. Pugh	1691	1402	1645	L 10	L 20	Wbye	L 12	L 14	1.0
26	Gerald A. Wheeler	1695	1491	1655	L 17	L 12	L 14	D 23	L 19	0.5

Reserve Section - 26th Annual Queen of Hearts - Feb.14-15, 1998*										
#	Player	prev	perf	post	1	2	3	4	5	Tot
1	Trent Sims	unr	1758	1758	W 14	D 9	W 12	W 5	W 3	**4.5**
2	W. V. Higginbotham	1540	1622	1557	W 21	L 8	W 15	W 7	W 6	**4.0**
3	Lamar Causey	1507	1618	1540	W 24	W 16	W 5	W 8	L 1	**4.0**
4	Joe R. Soloman	1500	1586	1514	W 11	L 13	Hbye	W 10	W 8	**3.5**
5	John Ervin Caldwell	1571	1521	1548	W 10	W 7	L 3	L 1	W 12	**3.0**
6	John T. O'Connor	1534	1398	1513	W 23	W 20	L 8	W 16	L 2	**3.0**
7	Allen G. Woodard	1470	1388	1444	W 25	L 5	W 24	L 2	W 18	**3.0**
8	David Sloan	1442	1558	1466	W 17	W 2	W 6	L 3	L 4	**3.0**
9	Mohamed Abdel-Ghany	1432	1412	1434	D 12	D 1	L 10	W 24	W 17	**3.0**
10	Scott Bitterman	1239	1499	1325	L 5	W 17	W 9	L 4	W 16	**3.0**
11	Ken Kirby	1136	1293	1192	L 4	W 14	D 20	L 12	W 19	**2.5**
12	Charles Hays	unr	1431	1431	D 9	W 22	L 1	W 11	L 5	**2.5**
13	Patrick Kee	1585	1809	1602	W 15	W 4	F	F	F	**2.0**
14	R. W. Ellis	1419	1159	1373	L 1	L 11	L 17	W 25	W 23	**2.0**
15	Donald E. Yessick	1318	1118	1290	L 13	Wbye	L 2	L 17	W 24	**2.0**
16	Dale F. Dickens	1303	1226	1288	W 19	L 3	W 18	L 6	L 10	**2.0**
17	Adrian Varon	unr	1307	1307	L 8	L 10	W 14	W 15	L 9	**2.0**
18	Jason Vest	unr	1186	1186	L 20	W 23	L 16	W 22	L 7	**2.0**
19	Derek Woodham	unr	980	980	L 16	L 24	W 25	W 23	L 11	**2.0**
20	Robert M. Rieves	1334	1304	1329	W 18	L 6	D 11	F	F	**1.5**
21	Jim O'Neal Griffin	1175	1141	1171	L 2	Hbye	Wbye	F	F	**1.5**
22	Edward Burton	1277	929	1236	Hbye	L 12	F	L 18	D 25	**1.0**
23	Phillip L. Causey	972	880	945	L 6	L 18	Wbye	L 19	L 14	**1.0**
24	Greg Wilder	634	1091	841	L 3	W 19	L 7	L 9	L 15	**1.0**
25	Tariq Hashim	unr	967	967	L 7	F	L 19	L 14	D 22	0.5

* Taken from the ACF Webpage

Open Section - Magic City Open - Nov. 15-16, 1997 *									
#	Player	Prev	Perf	Post	1	2	3	4	Tot
1	Andrew W. Whatley	2276	2473	2306	W 5	W 6	W 2	W 4	4.0
2	Bill Melvin	2206	2175	2206	W 4	W 7	L 1	W 5	3.0
3	Ray Downs	1969	2045	1979	L 6	D 5	W 7	W 9	2.5
4	Jack P. Gwin	1807	1861	1807	L 2	W 9	Wbye	L 1	2.0
5	Caesar W. Lawrence	1818	1888	1823	L 1	D 3	W 9	L 2	1.5
6	Stephen A. Muhammad	2461	2123	2450	W 3	L 1	F	F	1.0
7	Willie Calhoun	2000	1758	1976	W 9	L 2	L 3	F	1.0
8	nobody	unr	0000	0000	F	F	F	F	0.0
9	Christopher Oliver	unr	1499	1499	L 7	L 4	L 5	L 3	0.0
Reserve Section - Magic City Open - Nov. 15-16, 1997 *									
1	William E. Coleman	1419	1649	1457	W 10	W 6	W 3	D 2	3.5
2	Taylor A. Curtis	1284	1727	1356	W 5	W 7	W 8	D 1	3.5
3	Richard W. Ellis	1400	1711	1447	W 4	W 8	L 1	W 7	3.0
4	Walter J. Schaetzle	1782	1435	1758	L 3	Hbye	W 5	W 10	2.5
5	David Sloan	1448	1405	1442	L 2	W 10	L 4	W 8	2.0
6	Xavier Martine	1654	1372	1622	D 7	L 1	W 9	F	1.5
7	Riley E. Lane	1348	1249	1331	D 6	L 2	W 10	L 3	1.5
8	Mohamed Abdel-Ghany	1494	1170	1440	W 9	L 3	L 2	L 5	1.0
9	Robert M. Rieves	1348	1175	1333	L 8	Hbye	L 6	F	0.5
10	Philip Norton	1058	1099	1045	L 1	L 5	L 7	L 4	0.0
Novice Section - Magic City Open - Nov. 15-16, 1997 *									
1	Donald E. Yessick	1211	1296	1230	W 12	W 8	W 4	D 2	3.5
2	Joseph Marcom	unr	1341	1341	W 6	W 5	W 3	D 1	3.5
3	Warner Chandler	1063	1194	1097	W 9	W 7	L 2	W 8	3.0
4	Brennan G. Young	997	1125	1017	W 10	W 11	L 1	W 7	3.0
5	Ari Friedman	871	1184	904	Hbye	L 2	W 9	W 6	2.5
6	Kendra King	984	899	969	L 2	W 10	W 14	L 5	2.0
7	Thomas H. Young	975	847	959	W 15	L 3	W 11	L 4	2.0

8	Andres J. Rozsa	841	839	842	W 14	L 1	W 13	L 3	**2.0**
9	Nathanael W Chandler	827	784	820	L 3	W 15	L 5	W 14	**2.0**
10	Andrew Chandler	720	655	712	L 4	L 6	Wbye	W 13	**2.0**
11	Josh Wood	unr	793	793	Wbye	L 4	L 7	W 12	**2.0**
12	Michael Friedman	806	490	764	L 1	L 14	Wbye	L 11	**1.0**
13	Jonathan Spanos	unr	382	382	Hbye	Hbye	L 8	L 10	**1.0**
14	Matt Johnson	unr	665	665	L 8	W 12	L 6	L 9	**1.0**
15	Andy Grundhoefer	unr	502	502	L 7	L 9	F	Hbye	**0.5**
	Magic City G/10 Championship - Nov. 15, 1997 *								
1	Kyle Allen Therrell	2203	2208	2226	W 19	W 7	W 6	W 2	**4.0**
2	Stephen A. Muhammad	2460	2032	2448	W 11	W 4	W 3	L 1	**3.0**
3	Andrew W. Whatley	1981	1868	1984	W 14	W 8	L 2	W 10	**3.0**
4	Caesar W. Lawrence	1778	1760	1783	W 13	L 2	W 12	W 11	**3.0**
5	Bill Melvin	2123	1588	2088	W 12	L 9	W 14	D 7	**2.5**
6	Jack P. Gwin	1823	1684	1815	W 16	W 10	L 1	D 8	**2.5**
7	Kenneth Sloan	1760	1866	1783	W 15	L 1	W 9	D 5	**2.5**
8	W. V. Higginbotham	1655	1579	1659	W 18	L 3	W 15	D 6	**2.5**
9	Michael J. DeVivo	1682	1519	1671	W 20	W 5	L 7	L 12	**2.0**
10	Richard W. Ellis	1374	1526	1385	W 17	L 6	W 19	L 3	**2.0**
11	Taylor A. Curtis	1309	1568	1366	L 2	W 13	W 17	L 4	**2.0**
12	Donald E. Yessick	1211	1611	1325	L 5	W 20	L 4	W 9	**2.0**
13	Ari Friedman	1031	1284	1087	L 4	L 11	W 18	W 17	**2.0**
14	David Sloan	1184	1454	1188	L 3	W 18	L 5	D 15	**1.5**
15	Kendra King	973	1367	1055	L 7	W 19	L 8	D 14	**1.5**
16	Philip Norton	1102	995	1070	L 6	L 17	W 20	L 18	**1.0**
17	Joseph Marcum	unr	1032	1032	L 10	W 16	L 11	L 13	**1.0**
18	Matt Johnson	unr	1057	1057	L 8	L 14	L 13	W 16	**1.0**
19	Robert M. Rieves	1268	1075	1219	L 1	L 15	L 10	D 20	**0.5**
20	Michael Friedman	806	1016	866	L 9	L 12	L 16	D 19	**0.5**

* Taken from the ACF Webpage

Chess Foundation of Alabama Invests

by Sam Whatley

At the Queen of Hearts tournament in Montgomery (February, 1998) the Chess Foundation of Alabama elected new officers and made plans to begin a new phase in promoting chess in Alabama. Recent contributions from members of the Alabama Chess Federation allowed the Chess Foundation to invest $1500.00 in certificates of deposit. This is the first such deposit in the short history of the Foundation. The purpose of such investments is to produce ongoing income which can be used to expand chess programs and encourage more youth to discover chess and develop their skills in the game.

Need for such a foundation is demonstrated in the facing article, "Alabama Youth in England." Four of our teenagers have been invited to represent the USA in July, competing against others from England, Israel, and South Africa. Each American player will spend about $700.00 for the privilege. Some day the Chess Foundation of Alabama will be in a position to contribute to such a cause and perhaps enable a good player to develop into an outstanding player. Until then, each player continues to raise his own expenses. Some of our youth would be at the US Open or the World Open this year if it were financially possible.

Elected to the Board of Directors of the Foundation were: Samuel Whatley, President; James Reeder, Vice President; Camille Gaston, Secretary/Treasurer; Richard Ellis, Agent; Jack Mallory; Roy Stanton. As ACF President, Bill Melvin is an exofficio member.

I hope you will join with us and make a fully tax deducible financial contribution. Checks should be payable to Chess Foundation of Alabama and sent to

Richard Ellis
Agent, Chess Foundation of Alabama

Alabama Youth in England

by Sam Whatley

Four Alabama youth have been tapped to represent the United States in a junior chess tournament near London, England on July 14 - 16, 1998. Andy Reeder (Tuscaloosa) and Daniel Thomas (Huntsville) will be part of a twelve-player team representing twelve, thirteen, and fourteen-year-olds from across the nation. Andrew Whatley (Pike Road) has been selected to play on the U.S. team of fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen-year-olds. Matthew Puckett (Meridianville) was chosen as an alternate for this same team.

The tournament will take place at King Edward's School Witley in the town Godalming in the shire of Surrey, some forty miles south of London. The two U.S. teams will be facing similar teams from England, Israel, and South Africa.

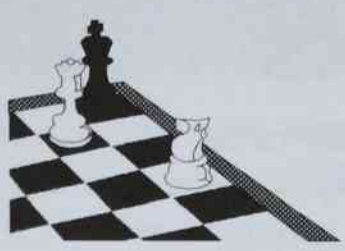
This is a great honor for the youth of our state and for those who have contributed time and effort to develop the scholastic chess program in Alabama. Alabama now ranks with New York and California in representing our nation in chess.

Such accomplishments involve costs. If you have ever traveled to another city to play in a chess tournament, you know what I mean. The hosts, King Edward's School Witley and the British Chess Federation, are providing for the players' room and board for the three days of the tournament. The US Chess Federation is paying $300.00 to defray each player's travel expense (estimated to run about $1000.00). No provisions have been made to defray any costs of parents or chaperones. If you would like to help sponsor one of these players, contact them directly or call Sam Whatley and leave a message, or write:

Sam Whatley
President, Chess Foundation of Alabama

Internet Chess Training with Senior Master / Fide Master Stephen Muhammad

- **Game Analysis**
- **1 on 1 play**
- **... and More !**



First Sunday Quads

When:	The First Sunday of **(almost)** every month (please check the ACF Calendar)
Where:	Hill University Center on the UAB campus (corner of University Ave and 14th Street South)
What:	Low-cost USCF rated Quads, G/45. **Entry fee: $2.00.** Some sections may be Hex, or G/30
Times:	**Registration,** 1:00-1:30; **Rounds,** 1:45, 3:15, 4:45
Prizes:	Clear winner in each section receives free entry to the next event.

All ages and all playing levels welcome. USCF Membership Required (available on site). This is a popular low-stress format. Come and enjoy the chess! No big $$, no big trophies - just chess. Please bring sets, boards and clocks. Round times are nominal - we'll play each round ASAP (RR format means no delay for pairings). Questions? - contact Kenneth Sloan

Other events:	The Birmingham Chess Club also meets at the Hill University Center, usually room 411, most Tuesday and Friday evenings from 6:30 to 10:00.

1997/8 "Heart of Dixie" Chess Tour *by Bill Melvin*

The Alabama **"Heart of Dixie"** Chess Tour is a year-long contest to help promote Alabama chess participation and competition. The 1997-98 Alabama "Heart of Dixie" tour will span from September 2, 1997 through the 1998 Alabama State Championship. For a tournament to qualify as an Alabama "Heart of Dixie" Tour event, it must meet the following requirements:

- It must be **USCF rated.**
- It must be an **open weekend tournament in Alabama (or within 10 miles of the ACF Affiliate's location) of at least three rounds** in length.
- It must be **advertised on the ACF WWW Calendar** as an Alabama "Heart of Dixie" tour event at least one month in advance. Multiple events may be scheduled for the same weekend.
- A copy of the final **wall chart** and appropriate Heart of Dixie Tour **fees** must be **submitted** to the ACF Secretary / Treasurer within two weeks of the end of the tournament.

Prize Fund

The prize fund will be formed from tournament fees of 50 cents per paticipant and other donations. The ACF is donating $200.00 to the prize fund for the "Heart of Dixie" Tour's second year. Prizes will be awarded to top players of each class by the following percentages of the prize fund:

Master/Expert:	1st, 10%; 2nd, 5%; 3rd, 3%
Class A:	1st, 10%; 2nd, 5%; 3rd, 3%
Class B:	1st, 8%; 2nd, 5%; 3rd, 3%
Class C:	1st, 8%; 2nd, 5%; 3rd, 3%
Class D:	1st, 8%; 2nd, 5%; 3rd, 3%
Class E/Unrated	1st, 8%; 2nd, 5%; 3rd, 3%

Conditions of Awarding Prizes

- The final class standing of a player will be determined by the August 1998 USCF rating supplement.
- Players must be ACF members to accumulate Heart of Dixie points.

Earning Heart of Dixie Points

ACF members may earn Heart of Dixie points as follows:

Each player participating in an Alabama USCF Grand Prix Dixie Tour event will earn 10 points. Players participating in the Alabama State Championship will earn 15 "Heart of Dixie" points. Players participating in all other "Heart of Dixie" Tour events will earn 5 "Heart of Dixie" points.

Players will be awarded additional Heart of Dixie points for their performance result in any "Heart of Dixie" Tour event. The performance award consists of the tournament score. For example, suppose Robert J. Kasparov scores 3.5 out of five at the Paint Rock Open, a (hypothetical) Heart of Dixie Grand Prix tournament. He would score 10 points for playing and 3.5 points for his result for a total of 13.5 Heart of Dixie points.

ACF Calendar *maintained by Dr. Ken Sloan*

This table of chess events is mostly taken from the webpage
Look it over and ***mark your calendar*** *with all events that you* ***might*** *want to play in! Organizers, please call or E-mail Dr. Sloan so that your tournament(s) can be listed. On very rare occasions, tournaments have to be cancelled or rescheduled after they have been announced in the Antics. For this reason, it is sometimes a good idea to communicate with theorganizer or contact person before driving to an out-of-town event*

Event	Date and City	Contact Person, phone and/or E-mail address
State Scholastic Team	May 9; Birmingham	Dale Robbins;
Vulcan Open A Heart of Dixie Tour Event	May 23 - 24; Birmingham	Kenneth Sloan;
Alabama G/10 Championship A Heart of Dixie Tour Event	May 23, Birmingham	Kenneth Sloan;
First Sunday Quads	June 7 Birmingham	Kenneth Sloan;
Deadline for submitting material for next *Antics*	July 3	Rhodes Peele,
First Sunday Quads	August 2 Birmingham	Kenneth Sloan;
First Sunday Quads	September 6 Birmingham	Kenneth Sloan;
Alabama State Championship A Heart of Dixie Tour Event	September 5 - 7; probably Montgomery	TBA

Maintaining the ACF Membership Roster ...

Look at the mailing address on this issue of *Alabama Chess Antics*. The first line contains (i) your membership type (REG = Regular, SCH = Scholastic, LIF = Life, AFFL = Affiliate); your ACF expiration date; (iii) your ACF membership, which in most cases is identical to your USCF membership number.

It is **up to you** to renew your membership before or when it expires and to bring problems to the **Secretary/Treasurer**'s attention if you or someone you know isn't getting the *Antics*. His mailing address and phone number appear page 2.

Delivery dates of the same issue to different members ay vary by as much as ten days due to the nature of bulk mail delivery.

The **Alabama Chess Federation** (ACF) is the United States Chess Federation (USCF) affiliate for the state of Alabama. Membership is open to any interested individual or organization by paying the annual membership dues. Please support Alabama chess by **joining** or **renewing** your annual membership in ACF. Benefits of membership include a subscription to the quarterly publication *Alabama Chess Antics.*

ACF Membership Application

☐ Regular, $10 ☐ Scholastic (under 19), $5 ☐ Affiliate, $15

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
USCF ID# (if applicable) _____
Phone and/or E-mail address _____

Mail this coupon or a photocopy along with payment to
Jack Mallory/ ACF Secretary-Treasurer/

Alabama Chess Antics

c/o Jeff Lake
Publisher, Alabama Chess Antics

Inside This Issue

- *A Tribute to Stuart Rachels*
- *Annotations by USCF Masters Stephen Muhammad, Bill Melvin, A.J. Goldsby*
- *Exciting developments in Alabama Scholastic Chess*
- *Lots more; and 36 pages !*